THE COLLECTED WORKS OF

Chögyam Trungpa

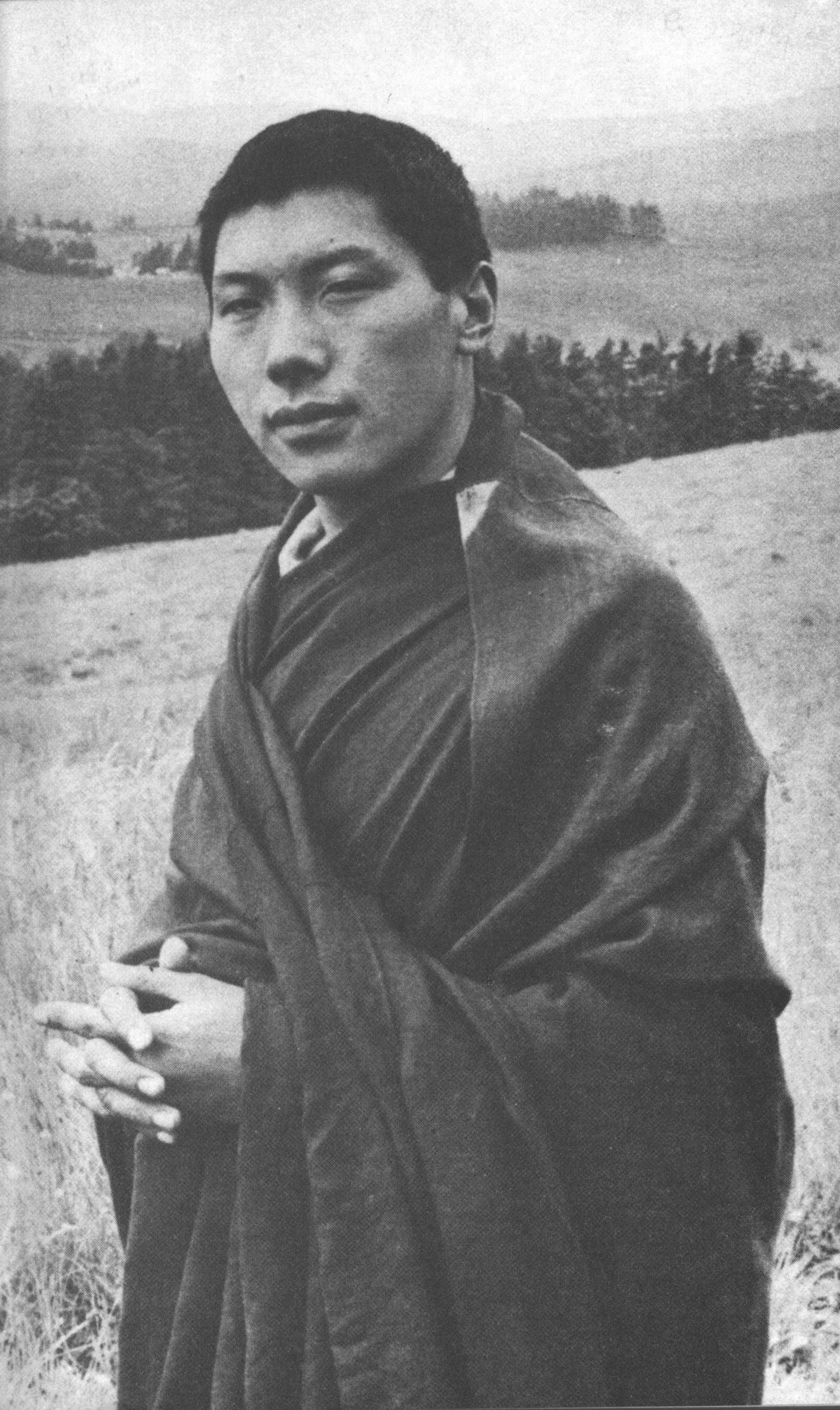
Volume One

BORN IN TIBET

MEDITATION IN ACTION

MUDRA

SELECTED WRITINGS



The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa

VOLUME ONE

Born in Tibet • *Meditation in Action* • *Mudra* • Selected Writings

VOLUME TWO

Glimpses of Abhidharma • *Glimpses of Mahayana* • *Glimpses of Shunyata* • *The Path Is the Goal* • *Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness* • Selected Writings

VOLUME THREE

Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism • *The Heart of the Buddha* • *The Myth of Freedom* • Selected Writings

VOLUME FOUR

The Dawn of Tantra • *Journey without Goal* • *The Lion's Roar* • An Interview with Chögyam Trungpa

VOLUME FIVE

Crazy Wisdom • *Illusion's Game* • *The Life of Marpa the Translator* (Excerpts) • *The Rain of Wisdom* (Excerpts) • *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* (Excerpts) • Selected Writings

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VOLUME SEVEN

The Art of Calligraphy (Excerpts) • *Dharma Art* • *Visual Dharma* (Excerpts) • Selected Poems • Selected Writings

VOLUME EIGHT

Great Eastern Sun: The Wisdom of Shambhala • *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior* • Selected Writings

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA

VOLUME ONE

Born in Tibet

Meditation in Action

Mudra

Selected Writings

EDITED BY
Carolyn Rose Gimian

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Page i: Photograph of Chögyam Trungpa in Scotland, circa 1968, provided by Tendzin Parsons. From the collection of the Shambhala Archives. Photographer unknown.

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DEDICATION

Supplications for the Vidyadhara the Venerable Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche

You who have realized the dharmata of what is,
With oceans of skillful deeds of a buddha's son,
You possess the buddha activity which tames
untamable beings:
May your body, speech, and mind be established
in the vajra nature.

Through the strength of the Buddha's wisdom and
compassion and that of his sons far and wide,
By the power of the oceans of lokapalas' and
dharmapalas' activity,
I ask for the good of the teachings and of beings:
May the body, speech, and mind of the glorious guru
remain in the vajra nature indestructibly.

With the dawn of the blessings of the gurus of the
three lineages
You bring the sun of dharma through the whole
expanse of the world;
The sight of you ripens and frees, and whatever
encounters you is liberated:
May the lotus garden of your good virtues beautify
the world.

The preceding supplication was made at Karmê Chöling with one-pointed mind, with veneration and joy, by an old Nyingma tantrika, Gyurme Thekchok Tenpe Gyaltsen [Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche], who is fortunate to rest under the white umbrella of the buddha activity of the second Buddha, Padmakara. SHUBHAM MANGALAM SHRI VIJAYANTU.

By the power and blessings of the mandala of the universal
three roots,
May Chökyi Gyatso, the vidyadhara, the tamer of beings,
Live and prosper in the vajra nature indestructibly.
May your magnificent buddha activity pervade all directions.

Thus, Jigdrel Yeshe Dorje [His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche] wrote this in supplication for the longevity of the supreme tulku Trungpa Rinpoche. SIDDHIR ASTU.

Translated by the NĀLANDĀ TRANSLATION COMMITTEE

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FOREWORD

by Diana J. Mukpo

My late husband, Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, was one of the main figures in the transmission of Buddhism to the West, especially to North America. As we know, Buddhism began in India, and from there it spread through many different nations and adapted itself to many cultures. The transplantation of the Buddhist teachings across many cultures and times is proof that, as long as human beings exist, fundamentally the nature of people's minds does not change. The fundamental issues that we have to deal with as human beings remain the same, as long as people live on this earth. Therefore, the teachings that Trungpa Rinpoche gave will always be applicable, even many years after his death. Therefore, it is of great importance to gather together and publish his teachings. Through *The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa,* people will continue to have access to his mind.

In some respects, Chögyam Trungpa's style as a teacher was unorthodox. He dressed in Western clothes and led a life that outwardly was quite secular. He presented the teachings in English and used many colloquial phrases and contemporary examples in his presentation of the dharma. This was very unusual for his time. His life seemed to be a major departure from his monastic upbringing in Tibet. However, interestingly enough, when I traveled back to Surmang Dütsi Tel, his monastery in Tibet, for the first time last summer, it was apparent to me that essentially what he was presenting was very traditional. I felt that there was no fundamental difference in how Buddhism was practiced in Tibet and how it is practiced in the West, in terms of people living their lives

according to the dharma and taking the principles of buddhadharma to heart.

Of course, we have a much more complicated and complex society in the West, so the teachings here need to be presented in a different way. My husband understood this. One of the very important ways that he adapted to the West was in his presentation of the Shambhala teachings and his discussion of the concept of creating an enlightened society. These days, most of us don't have the option of going into seclusion in a monastery to practice Buddhism. For most people, these principles have to be applied and effective in our day-to-day lives, how we live our lives each day. Therefore, Rinpoche brought forth the ideas that had been practiced and studied in a monastic context in Tibet and started to show how they can be manifested in society. He developed a broad spectrum of ways to apply the teachings to society in North America. Therefore, while Rinpoche appeared to teach in a nontraditional way, fundamentally the pith of what he taught was very traditional.

One of the hallmarks of Rinpoche's way of teaching was to ask students to think for themselves and not to follow anything or anyone with blind faith. The end product was a group of practitioners and students who had tremendous confidence in themselves and in their understanding of the teachings. Rinpoche tried to develop people's own qualities, rather than asking for blind devotion. He firmly believed that Westerners were capable of practicing and understanding the dharma fully and completely. The irony was that his close students had tremendous devotion to him. Because he never tried to make people purely submit to his will and because he wanted people to develop themselves, they also ended up developing great love and respect for him and immense gratitude for his influence on their lives.

From the time that he was a young boy in Tibet, Trungpa Rinpoche was recognized as a tertön, a teacher who finds terma, which are the hidden teachings and treasures left by Padmasambhava for the people of future dark ages. The idea is that particular terma teachings will be found at the time that they are most helpful to people and when people can practice these teachings. They are found by realized teachers who have a karmic connection both with Guru Rinpoche and with the practitioners who receive the teachings. Some of these teachings are physically concealed in rocks or lakes or other places in Tibet, and some of them are called "mind terma," because the tertön finds them hidden in

the realm of space, or the mind. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* is a well-known terma text.

Rinpoche found a number of physical terma in Tibet, but perhaps the most important terma that he uncovered were the mind terma that he found after his escape. First he found "The Sadhana of Mahamudra" in Bhutan, when he did a retreat there after he had been living in England for several years. And then in North America, he discovered a number of important Shambhala terma, texts that have to do with how Western students can manifest the teachings, how they can overcome obstacles through manifesting the bravery and confidence of the warrior. Rinpoche's discovery of these teachings is a further confirmation of the deep connection that he had with Westerners and the importance of his role in bringing both the Shambhala and the Buddhist teachings to the West. They are also a sign of his deep faith in Western students to practice and protect the precious holy dharma.

Soon after his arrival in America, my husband began to make plans to bring great Tibetan lineage holders to teach in the West. In that way, he worked to bring together his tradition with the contemporary Western world. He was instrumental in bringing His Holiness the sixteenth Gyalwang Karmapa, Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, to America, and the Buddhist communities established by Rinpoche—along with some of His Holiness's other students—hosted three visits by the Karmapa to America. Trungpa Rinpoche and his students also helped to host the first two visits of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the United States, as well as a number of visits by His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and other revered spiritual teachers. During the Karmapa's first visit, he proclaimed Chögyam Trungpa as a vajra holder of the practice lineage of the Karma Kagyü. Clearly, whatever unconventional means Rinpoche applied to bringing the dharma to the West, the great teachers of the lineage understood the purity of his intention and the purity of the teachings that he proclaimed.

On behalf of the Mukpo family, I am very happy to see the publication of *The Collected Works*. It has been more than fifteen years since Rinpoche's death. I know that he would be very pleased by the publication of this collection of his work. More than that, however, he would be pleased to see that his students have continued to practice the teachings that they received from him and that many, many people continue to be introduced to the Buddhist and Shambhala teachings that were so close

to his heart. I hope that the future will bring many more beings to the path of dharma and that people will continue to be inspired by the profound teachings that my husband left for all of us to contemplate and practice.

DIANA JUDITH MUKPO
December 22, 2002
Providence, Rhode Island

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

by Samuel Bercholz

Namo Gurave

Homage to the glorious All-Good, the space of absolute awareness!
Homage to Vajradhara, fearless indestructible lord of life
and death!
Homage to Padmasambhava, embodiment of the wisdom of all
the Buddhas!
I prostrate at the feet of the great master, Chökyi Gyatso,
who through his extraordinary kindness has shown the
way of dharma to numberless beings!

Near the end of his long career, when the famed British historian Arnold J. Toynbee was asked by a reporter what he thought the greatest event of the twentieth century was, he immediately answered, "It is the introduction of Buddhism into the West." And it's likely that the most influential teacher to have introduced Buddhism to the West was the Tibetan master Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. Like his eighth-century predecessor Padmasambhava, the great Indian master and progenitor of Buddhism in Tibet, Trungpa Rinpoche was able to skillfully transmit Buddhist teachings and Buddhist culture from Tibet to the Western world.

I first ran across Trungpa Rinpoche's work while I was a university student in 1967. Browsing through the library, I found his autobiography, *Born in Tibet*, which had just been published in the United States by Helen and Kurt Wolff. Reading it made me quite interested in learning more about Tibetan Buddhism, especially as I also happened to be read-

ing *The Life and Teachings of Naropa*, a biography of one of the forefathers in Trungpa Rinpoche's lineage.

In the spring of 1969 I traveled to Great Britain, hoping to meet Trungpa Rinpoche at Samye Ling Tibetan Meditation Centre in southern Scotland. But due to a rail strike, it was impossible to get there. Vincent Stuart, a publisher in London, gave me the short manuscript of Rinpoche's entitled *Meditation in Action.*

That manuscript had an extraordinary effect. Its presentation of basic Buddhism was so immediately present; it spoke in a clear and natural language I'd never encountered before. It was as if the author were speaking straight to me. I'd been thinking of starting out as a publisher for a while now, and it seemed more than auspicious that this book would become the first title.

Mr. Stuart printed one thousand copies by letterpress for a North American edition, published in the autumn of 1969 to coincide with his British edition. And over time, in the more than thirty years since its first appearance, many scores of thousands have found that Trungpa Rinpoche's iteration of Buddhism spoke to them in their language too.

Trungpa Rinpoche was surprised when he received the first copy of the North American edition of his book. He looked at the spine and saw: Trungpa *Meditation in Action* Shambhala. He later told me that at first it looked like a hallucination to him, so he had to put it down and look again. By auspicious coincidence, the name that was chosen for the publishing company was the same as a tradition of which Rinpoche was a principal lineage holder. The Shambhala teachings were revealed by the Buddha at the request of the king of the ancient kingdom of Shambhala, as documented in the *Kalachakra Tantra.* During Trungpa Rinpoche's escape from the Chinese occupation of Tibet, he was writing a book, *The Annals of the Empire of Shambhala,* which was unfortunately lost during a river crossing just before he entered India. Occasionally in later years, when Shambhala was mentioned, he would refer to it as "our little secret."

In the spring of 1970, I received a phone call from one of Trungpa Rinpoche's students on the East Coast, telling me that Rinpoche had just arrived in North America. She asked if Shambhala Publications would be interested in arranging a couple of talks for Rinpoche in the San Francisco Bay Area, where Shambhala Publications was located at the time. I said yes, and a few weeks later met Trungpa Rinpoche at the San Fran-

cisco Airport. To my surprise, the exotic lama from Tibet that I had expected turned out to be a gentleman in a Western business suit, walking with a cane and leg brace, who spoke the Queen's English brilliantly. He was extremely cheerful and extremely playful with his use of language. We immediately became good friends, and began making plans to publish more of his works in the future. (As it turned out, Shambhala became the publisher for all of his writings for the general public.) Then our relationship changed dramatically sometime in 1972, after a famous poetry reading at the University of Colorado. Rinpoche was reading some poems from *Mudra*, sharing the stage with four other poets, Robert Bly, Allen Ginsberg, Nanao Sakaki, and Gary Snyder. During their readings, Rinpoche acted quite outrageously, laughing at their seriousness, making faces, and at one point holding a meditation gong over his head. After the reading, the poets retired to a small apartment in Boulder. They were quite angry and complained to Rinpoche about his behavior; they accused him of being like Jack Kerouac, brilliant but a rude drunk. My perceptual phenomenon must have been quite different from theirs, however poetic; that night I saw Trungpa Rinpoche as the Buddha, a completely enlightened being, and I could do nothing other than request to be accepted as his full vajrayana disciple, and to serve him.

In addition to being a sublime teacher of the Buddhist teachings, Trungpa Rinpoche had a great gift with language. In fact, I believe that he singlehandedly began the transformation of the English language into a medium that could serve as a dharma language to convey the subtle meanings of Buddhist philosophy and practice. Trungpa Rinpoche was a great writer and poet. The style of his writing has a lightness and gravity that is inseparable from his speaking style. There is a playfulness and amazing precision in his style that accentuate his boundless skillful means in transmitting the Buddha's teachings on the perfect frequency for Western minds.

The publication of this multivolume *Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa* is the fruit of Rinpoche's great kindness in providing a complete roadmap for anyone who would like to enter into the Buddhist path. Also included are his public writings on the Shambhala teachings, which are important in helping to provide a social and cultural basis for the wisdom of the Buddha's teaching in the context of modern Western society. "Our little secret" was revealed to me and other of Trungpa Rinpoche's students when he presented the talks that later became the basis

for his *Shambhala: Sacred Path of the Warrior,* and the "secret" is now available to all who would like to study it. It is one of his most important contributions to this world.

The only major part of Trungpa Rinpoche's teachings not included in this first edition of his *Collected Works* are the teachings that Trungpa Rinpoche gave at various Buddhist three-month seminaries that he taught from 1973 to 1986. He wanted an edited version of these talks to be published in a three-volume series. The teachings imparted at these seminaries were his most compendious presentation of the Buddhist teachings. When these works have been fully edited and published, I will be pleased that my job as Trungpa Rinpoche's publisher and as his Kalon Yigdzö (Minister of the Treasury of Dharma) has been fulfilled for this lifetime. It is my most sincere aspiration that I will be able to follow his example and to also be of service to him and his precious lineages of Kagyü, Nyingma, and Shambhala not only in this lifetime but also in all future lifetimes.

SAMUEL BERCHOLZ
December 1, 2002
Kunzang Gatsel, Delhi, New York

EDITOR'S NOTE

IN PREPARING THE WRITINGS of Chögyam Trungpa for publication in *The Collected Works*, some minor copyediting changes have been made to the texts: to correct stylistic or grammatical errors, to conform the spelling of English words to American usage, and to update the spellings of foreign words and make them consistent.

For the convenience of readers, it was decided that each volume should have a single glossary of selected terms at the end of the book. The glossaries from individual books in the volume were thus combined to create these unified glossaries. The glossaries of the individual books often contain expanded definitions that were composed under the guidance or with the approval of Chögyam Trungpa. Other, briefer definitions were added as needed.

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME ONE

The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa brings together in eight volumes the writings of one of the first and most influential Tibetan teachers to present Buddhism in the West. From his arrival in England in 1963 until his death in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, Chögyam Trungpa (1939–1987)[1] was the author of thirteen books. Of these, ten appear in full in this collection. His translations of major Buddhist texts (*The Tibetan Book of the Dead, The Rain of Wisdom,* and *The Life of Marpa*) have been omitted, but his introductions and other unique contributions to those publications are included.

Since his death, another thirteen books have been compiled from his lectures and poetry and published by Shambhala Publications. All of them appear in this compendium, although some illustrative material has of necessity been omitted. Vajradhatu Publications, the small press started by Chögyam Trungpa's Buddhist organization, has published four books for a general audience, which will also be found in *The Collected Works.* (That press has also produced several dozen edited transcripts and a number of limited editions, which are not reprinted in this series.) Additionally, more than seventy articles from many sources are

1. There has been some confusion about Chögyam Trungpa's precise date of birth. *Born in Tibet* gives it as the full-moon day of the first month of the Earth Hare year, 1939. Other autobiographical sources, including an important doha (song) that he wrote in Tibet, suggest that he was born in the year of the Iron Dragon, 1940. Later in his life, he himself considered this to be his birth year. However, since *Born in Tibet* is included in Volume One of *The Collected Works,* I have given 1939 as his birth year in this introduction.

included, along with poetry published by two small Canadian presses, Trident Publications and Windhorse, as well as several published interviews and forewords, prefaces, and introductions to books by other authors.

This extensive body of work illustrates that Trungpa Rinpoche[2] was a remarkably prolific teacher whose writings continue to attract great interest. With plans being made for many more publications based on the recordings and transcripts of his many hundreds of seminars, as well as on his poetry and writings, it seems that his prodigious activity in bringing the buddhadharma, the teachings of the Buddha, to the West will continue to flourish for many years to come.

In arranging the material for the eight volumes of *The Collected Works*, a decision was made to arrange the volumes thematically rather than chronologically. In part, this was because of the diverse nature of Chögyam Trungpa's literary endeavors. In addition to his books on the practice of meditation and the Buddhist path, five volumes and several broadsides of his poetry have been published, as well as three books on art and the artistic process. Two books on the Shambhala path of enlightened warriorship have also been produced. He also wrote a number of articles on Western psychology, along with short pieces on themes such as feminine energy and spiritual gardening. If all of these writings were organized in *The Collected Works* purely by year of publication, some rather strange juxtapositions would result. Moreover, the fecund connections among works on a similar theme would be much less apparent.

Another reason for the thematic organization is that Trungpa Rinpoche's posthumous volumes contain material from both very early seminars in North America and much later lectures. So chronology of publication would be a misleading organizing principle.

That said, Volume One, which contains his early writings in Great Britain, is the exception to the rule. The style of those works differs radically from the voice that emerged when he began to teach, and to be published, in North America. It thus seemed both useful and appropriate to group together the writings from England.

Chögyam Trungpa's first book, *Born in Tibet*, was published by

2. *Rinpoche*, which literally means "precious one," is a respectful title for a Tibetan teacher.

George Allen & Unwin in 1966, approximately three years after he came from India to Oxford on a Spalding scholarship. There are no known writings of his from India, evidently because no writings were produced, saved, or passed on to Western students. He was twenty years old when he arrived in India in January of 1960, having traveled on foot and horseback over the Himalayas from eastern Tibet to escape the communist Chinese, a journey that lasted ten months. That odyssey is in part the subject matter of *Born in Tibet.*

In India he began his study of the English language, learning a great deal from Freda Bedi, an Englishwoman who later became a Buddhist nun under the name Sister Kenchog Palmo. Mrs. Bedi was very active in helping the Tibetan refugees and had started the Young Lamas Home School in Delhi, assisted by Trungpa Rinpoche, who was appointed spiritual adviser to the school. While in India, he was also tutored in English by John Driver, who later was of great assistance in his studies of Western literature, religion, and philosophy at Oxford. Trungpa Rinpoche had been first exposed to Western poetry in India, initially through a chance encounter with a Japanese haiku translated in a magazine he was reading to improve his English, and later by hearing the work of T. S. Eliot and other English poets at a reading sponsored by an American women's club in New Delhi.[3] Rinpoche had also made the acquaintance of the American poets Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky in India when they visited the Young Lamas Home School.[4]

Although he was an avid student of the language, Chögyam Trungpa's English was still rudimentary when he sailed for England. More than that, his understanding of Western thought and culture was limited. He went to England because he wanted to teach Buddhism in the West, but in order to do so, he first needed to educate himself in Western ways.

The earliest published writing included in Volume One of *The Collected Works* is a brief article entitled "Om Mani Padme Hum Hrih,"

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3. See *First Thought Best Thought*, preface, p. xix.

4. Neither Rinpoche nor Ginsberg seemed to remember this brief meeting when they next encountered one another in the 1970s in New York. Ginsberg only realized that he had met Chögyam Trungpa in India after the latter's death. When Ginsberg examined a photograph taken during his visit to the Young Lamas School, he saw that the lama who showed him around the school was none other than Trungpa Rinpoche, who had been one of his most important Buddhist teachers from the 1970s on.

which appeared in the August 1963 issue of *The Middle Way*, the journal of the Buddhist Society in England.[5] That was followed by "Taking Refuge" in the November 1963 issue. In that issue of the magazine, there is also a photograph of Trungpa Rinpoche with the Western Buddhist scholar Marco Pallis (who wrote the foreword to *Born in Tibet*) and the Parsi author and scholar of religion Phiroz Mehta, as well as two other Tibetan lamas, Akong Rinpoche and Rechung Rinpoche. The caption says that the photo was taken at the Buddhist Society Summer School in 1963. This must have been only months after Chögyam Trungpa's arrival in England. Both of these early articles are well written, but the language and the style in which they present the Buddhist teachings are dramatically different from the way Trungpa Rinpoche expressed himself even a few years later. It's very likely that Trungpa Rinpoche had extensive help with the editing and wording of these pieces, since his fluency in English was quite limited at this point. Although the articles show flashes of his brilliant intellect, in general the depth and luminous quality of his teachings are quite veiled in these earliest pieces from *The Middle Way*. It's clear that he didn't yet have the grasp of the language to convey the subtle and unique understanding that distinguished his teachings. In contrasting these articles with the pieces published by *The Middle Way* five years later, in 1968, one sees just how much Trungpa Rinpoche had immersed himself in Western thought in the intervening time. In the later articles he makes references to concepts from Western philosophy and literature, and his grasp of the language has clearly grown exponentially.

However, it was not just knowledge of the English language or of Western thought that Chögyam Trungpa needed in order to teach in the West. He was not interested purely in presenting an overview of Buddhism to Westerners, nor did he simply want to give basic instruction in meditation or provide some outward affinity with tantric practices such as visualization and mantra repetition. He was heir to a spiritual heritage

5. The version of this article that appears in *The Collected Works* is based on the article that appeared in *The Middle Way* as well as on material from another manuscript that was discovered in Chögyam Trungpa's papers housed in the Shambhala Archives. This early typed version of the article included a few significant additions to the discussion, which for some reason were omitted from the text as published in *The Middle Way*. More notably, the earlier manuscript includes a chart that outlines the relationship of the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM to overcoming various obstacles and attaining the wisdom of the five buddha families. This chart has been included with the article in Volume One of *The Collected Works*. It is the first time the chart has been published.

of extraordinary depth and power, and it was the innermost teachings of his lineage that he wanted to transmit to his students in the West. To do this, he had to get inside the minds and hearts of Westerners; he had to know us from the inside out if he was to speak to us from that dimension. In the process, he faced many obstacles.

Even among the most realized Tibetan teachers, there were few—particularly at that time—who trusted Western students completely or thought them capable of understanding and putting into practice the deepest, most essential truths of the buddhadharma. Trungpa Rinpoche did have this faith, this trust in the Western mind. One sees this trust emerge from the very early days, in his first book published in England, *Born in Tibet*, an autobiography recounting his early life and training in Tibet and the dramatic story of his arduous escape. One can read this book on a simple level, skimming the surface of outer events; but a deeper reading reveals the author's desire, even this early on, to share intimate details of his inner experience. For example, he describes his relationship with his main teacher, Jamgön Kongtrul of Sechen, and the significance of their meetings, in a way that goes far beyond a superficial telling. It is as if he invites the reader into the room with him when he is with his teacher and also, throughout the book, allows the reader to know his thoughts and emotions, including pain and doubt. He thus seems to have displayed a remarkable openness, considering how guarded most of his Tibetan colleagues were with their Western students. At the same time, he was not oblivious to a strong tendency among some Westerners, especially during this era in England, to view Eastern "gurus" with a mixture of awe and paternalism, treating them almost like spiritually advanced children who were unable to cope with the complexities of modern life. Yet he was able to steer confidently between the dualistic extremes of naive trustfulness and excessive reserve.

His ability to see all sides of Westerners' reaction to their early encounters with Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhists is beautifully reflected in the first epilogue to *Born in Tibet*, which Chögyam Trungpa added to the Penguin paperback edition published in 1971, a year after he had left England for America. Of his experience in England, he wrote, "It was also the first time I had been the object of that fascination which is noncommunicative and nonrelating, of being seen as an example of a species rather than as an individual: 'Let's go see the lamas at Oxford.' . . . [On the other hand] one particularly beautiful thing to hear in Eng-

land was Western Buddhists giving talks on the dharma. It was so refreshing to see that the teachings could be presented in the local language. . . . At the same time it was an uplifting experience to see such interest in the actual practice of meditation. . . ."[6]

To be sure, there were many of his Tibetan colleagues, his English friends, and his Western students who were nothing like the negative descriptions above. Or in many cases they were simply manifesting natural reticence, an inclination to be shy and reserved with people one doesn't know well. In this case, the reticence involved whole cultures that had no intimacy with one another. So one hesitates to mention these tendencies, because they can be narrow and misleading characterizations. Yet it seems necessary to point to exactly these sorts of difficulties that he encountered in England, in order to understand the depth of his compassion, the breadth of his transformation, and his courage in leaving behind many of the trappings of his culture and many aspects of the monastic lifestyle that he dearly loved.

Indeed, no amount of formal education or study of the English language was going to make him an insider. He might get a front-row seat by working hard at his studies, but he was never going to be one of the players on the stage. More and more he came to realize this, and more and more he stepped outside the polite bounds of both Tibetan and English proper society in order to have real contact with the hearts and minds of the people he encountered. In many of his early talks, both in England and in the first few years in America, he spoke about the value and meaning of communication. It was not an abstract topic for him. He spent much of his effort during his early years in the West finding a genuine way to open to others and to invite them to open up to him. At the same time that he was working to overcome their tendencies to hold back, he had to work against his own.

He spoke a number of times about the crisis that he reached in this endeavor. In Volume One of *The Collected Works*, this discussion is found

6. From the epilogue to the Penguin edition of *Born in Tibet*, © 1971 by Penguin Books, Inc. See pp. 280, 281 of Volume One of *The Collected Works*. Until the publication of *The Collected Works*, this epilogue was out of print for many years. It contains revealing information about the time that Chögyam Trungpa spent in England, as well as a powerful discussion of his ongoing spiritual relationship with his Tibetan gurus after he left Tibet. Although he never saw his main teachers again, they continued to provide inspiration for his journey in the West.

in *Born in Tibet* in both the 1971 epilogue to the Penguin edition and the 1977 epilogue, "Planting Dharma in the West," which Trungpa Rinpoche composed for the Shambhala Publications edition of the book, which appeared ten years after its first publication. This spiritual crisis came to a head over several years. Rinpoche describes a kind of mental "breakthrough" that occurred in 1968 when he undertook a retreat at Taktsang in Bhutan, a cave where Padmasambhava, the great teacher who helped to bring the buddhadharma to Tibet, had manifested in a powerful, wrathful form. During his retreat, Chögyam Trungpa composed—or, more accurately, received—*The Sadhana of Mahamudra,* a text concerned with overcoming the obstacles of physical, psychological, and spiritual materialism that plague the modern world. This text is considered "mind terma," a "treasure" text planted by Padmasambhava in the realm of space, from which it could be awakened or retrieved as a kind of revelation or vision many generations later, and thus passed on directly to practitioners in the future dark age. The text is concerned with how individuals can free themselves from the knots of materialism to connect with the power of genuine wisdom. It is a guide to individual liberation, which can then be harnessed to help a greater world. For its author, or its "discoverer," it was certainly a personal awakening. As he writes in the 1977 epilogue, "The message that I had received from my supplication was that one must try to expose spiritual materialism and all its trappings, otherwise true spirituality could not develop. I began to realize that I would have to take daring steps in my life" (p. 264).

He returned from Bhutan to Great Britain, where in spite of the inner discoveries he had made, he found that outwardly he was still hesitant to jump in fully. A few months later, in early 1969, he was severely injured in a car accident, from which he emerged paralyzed on the left side. However, he took the accident as good news, a breakthrough: "In spite of the pain, my mind was very clear; there was a strong sense of communication—finally the real message had got through—and I felt a sense of relief and even humor. . . . I realized that I could no longer attempt to preserve any privacy for myself, any special identity or legitimacy. I should not hide behind the robes of a monk, creating an impression of inscrutability, which, for me, turned out to be only an obstacle. With a sense of further involving myself with the sangha, I determined to give up my monastic vows. More than ever, I felt myself given over to serving the cause of Buddhism" (pp. 264–65).

In "Things Get Very Clear When You're Cornered," a 1976 interview in *The Laughing Man* magazine, Chögyam Trungpa talks about the dilemmas faced by Tibetan teachers and his own personal challenge in teaching in the West, as well as the message of his accident:

> Tibetans generally have to break through the cultural fascinations and mechanized world of the twentieth century. Many Tibetans either hold back completely or try to be extraordinarily cautious, not communicating anything at all. Sometimes they just pay lip-service to the modern world, making an ingratiating diplomatic approach to the West. The other temptation is to regard the new culture as a big joke and to play the game in terms of a conception of Western eccentricities. So we have to break through all of that. I found within myself a need for more compassion for Western students. We don't need to create impossible images but to speak to them directly, to present the teachings in eye-level situations. I was doing the same kind of thing that I just described, and a very strong message got through to me [after my accident]: 'You have to come down from your high horse and live with them as individuals!' So the first step is to talk with people. After we make friends with students they can begin to appreciate our existence and the quality of the teachings.[7]

A few months after having renounced his monastic vows, in an even more radical move, on January 3, 1970, Trungpa Rinpoche married. His bride, Diana Judith Pybus, was a young woman of sixteen at the time. Three months after they married and within a year of his accident, he and Diana left England for North America.

These events of 1968 to 1970 show an enormous shift in Chögyam Trungpa's outer manifestation. The writings that make up Volume One of *The Collected Works* are a window into the inner world of this extraordinary man, both before and during this transformation. For his manifestation after these changes, we have another seven volumes to peruse!

Diana Mukpo, the author's wife, remarked on how much his outer being changed following his accident. She first met him during a seminar he was giving in London at the Buddhist Society in early 1969. Trungpa Rinpoche had just recently returned from Bhutan, where he had re-

7. For the full text of this interview, see Volume Four of *The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa*.

ceived the sadhana. It was before the accident. Diana requested a personal interview with him, which she describes as follows: "During the interview, Rinpoche was incredibly sweet. . . . To me he seemed to be a very pure being: so kind, so pure, so sharp. During the interview, I had the sense that he was touching my mind with his. There was absolutely no barrier in our communication. Whomever he worked with, he was in love with the other person's mind. I felt that he had no personal agenda except to be kind and helpful."[8]

The next time she saw him was in the fall of 1969, when she hitchhiked to Samye Ling, Rinpoche's meditation center in Scotland. She writes:

> The first evening I was at Samye-Ling, Rinpoche came by to have dinner with the other Tibetans who lived at Samye-Ling. After dinner, as he was leaving . . . I saw him outside getting ready to depart. He was no longer wearing monk's robes, but instead he had on a layman's chuba, or robe, and he was walking slowly in a laboured way with the aid of a walker. I realized that he was quite crippled from the accident. I managed to get close to him. . . . Although I only saw Rinpoche that evening for a few minutes, in that short period of time, I realized that he was a completely different person than he had been before his accident. Of course, he looked quite different physically because he was paralysed on one side and had obviously been through a lot. But that wasn't it. It wasn't just his physical being that had changed. He had a very different manifestation now, which I found fascinating. Before the accident, he had been a youthful Tibetan monk, so pure and light. Now he was much more heavy and solid, and there was a sort of old dog or well-processed feeling about him. He seemed much older, and he had an unfathomable quality that I hadn't experienced before. He was transformed."[9]

That purity and lightness, which others who knew Trungpa Rinpoche during this time have also noted, are reflected in the quality and style of *Born in Tibet*, as well as in the articles published in *The Middle Way*. This light touch is also apparent in Chögyam Trungpa's first book on the Bud-

8. From "Mukpo," an unpublished memoir by Diana J. Mukpo with Carolyn Rose Gimian.

9. Ibid.

dhist path, *Meditation in Action,* which was based on talks he gave at Samye-Ling beginning in 1967. There are indeed a sweetness and a gentleness that pervade these early works. While not abandoned later, these qualities became colored by a deeper range of emotions and a different vocabulary in America.

The third book that is included in Volume One, *Mudra,* was not in fact published until 1972, several years after Chögyam Trungpa came to North America. However, it has been included in Volume One because the core writings in *Mudra* are poems composed in England in the 1960s. (The translation of a poem that the author wrote in the Valley of Mystery in Tibet in 1959 also appears here.) There are several poems from 1965, in a section called "Songs"; the remaining verses are all from 1969, several from before the author's accident, the remainder following it. Together they give us another picture of this period: the voice of the poet, which for Trungpa Rinpoche was always a highly personal voice, much more so than the tone of his lectures.

Up to this point, the discussion has been of how one can read these early works for signs of the author's personal growth and development. In many schools of Buddhism, the teacher's life is taken as an important object of study and contemplation. For it is assumed that the life of a great teacher is a life that contains many lessons. A teacher's life is teaching by example.

However, *The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa* is not the author's spiritual biography, and in general it is not the editor's intent to discuss themes from Rinpoche's personal life in the introduction to each of the volumes. Yet it seemed that for this first volume it was worth making an exception and including in this commentary some important biographical themes, especially since the author's only *auto*biography, *Born in Tibet,* is included here. However, the teachings from this early period can primarily be enjoyed as good reading and for the good dharma that they expound.

When *Born in Tibet* was published in 1966, it was among the very earliest Tibetan autobiographies and accounts of life in Tibet told by a Tibetan in English. It was also one of the first descriptions of the communist occupation of that country recounted firsthand by a Tibetan. There are few works, even today, from which one can learn as much about the traditional upbringing and training of an incarnate teacher in Tibet. It owes its genesis very much to its English editor, Esmé Cramer

Roberts. Chögyam Trungpa and Mrs. Roberts were introduced through mutual acquaintances at the Buddhist Society in Oxford. In his foreword to the book, Marco Pallis thanks Mrs. Roberts for "her encouragement in the first place," without which, he notes, "the work might never have been begun." Mrs. Roberts and Trungpa Rinpoche worked on the book together for more than two years.

Born in Tibet was written at a time when Chögyam Trungpa's command of English was still very much a work in progress. Understandably, the language and the style employed in the book were heavily influenced by Mrs. Roberts's own skills with the English language. It is fortunate for the reader that she was such a sensitive editor; much of the charm of the phraseology of *Born in Tibet,* as well as its literacy, were undoubtedly her contributions.

Marco Pallis also notes that Mrs. Roberts tried very hard to preserve the flavor of the author's thoughts. As he puts it, "she wisely did not try and tamper with a characteristically Tibetan mode of expression." Without knowing exactly what he meant by this, it is still clear that Chögyam Trungpa himself, not his editor, determined the basic content and structure of the book. Mrs. Roberts was the first of many book editors he worked with. And while all of these made their imprint on his printed words, none of them—starting with this first venture—overrode the strength of his vision and his ability to communicate that.

There is some evidence that Mrs. Roberts sometimes did not understand all the details of the stories Trungpa Rinpoche told her. A number of years later, when he gave several seminars on the lineage of the Trungpa tulkus (incarnate lamas) and on his teacher Jamgön Kongtrul, there were small but notable discrepancies in his description of various events. That said, *Born in Tibet* is a book that he was proud of, and he was immensely grateful to Esmé Cramer Roberts for having helped him to write it.

Richard Arthure, the editor of *Meditation in Action,* shared the following information about Mrs. Roberts:

> I never met Mrs. Cramer Roberts, to whom the Vidyadhara [Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche] dictated the accounts of his early life that are recorded in *Born in Tibet.* But Rinpoche did tell me a couple of things about working with her. . . . He used to go over to her house in Oxford for afternoon tea and recount the stories of his life in Tibet,

> which she would write down. With a certain amusement, Rinpoche commented that Mrs. Cramer Roberts was an elderly and rather genteel English lady and that she completely omitted from the book certain episodes that she considered improper and not suitable for publication. She died shortly after the book appeared and, according to Rinpoche, such was her fascination with Tibet and Tibetans that she took rebirth in the Tibetan exile community in India."[10]

In 1977 Chögyam Trungpa added the epilogue "Planting the Dharma in the West" to *Born in Tibet*. It described his life from the time he arrived in India in 1960 until 1976, when he wrote the epilogue in Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, at the Vajradhatu Seminary. The epilogue was edited by David I. Rome, Rinpoche's private secretary and the editor of *First Thought Best Thought* and *Timely Rain*. In 1985 Rinpoche began work on a second epilogue to the book, which I was asked to edit. In preparation for our editorial meetings on this project, I put together a chronology of events from 1976 to 1985 to be included in the second epilogue and met several times with Trungpa Rinpoche to begin working with him on this project. However, he decided to postpone our work, and the final epilogue to *Born in Tibet* was never completed.

At the time that *Born in Tibet* was published, it may have struck most of its readers as an exotic tale of a faraway land, a fascinating story but one with little direct application to their lives. In a way that was characteristic of how he taught altogether, its author saw his audience for this book in the broadest possible terms. He wrote *Born in Tibet*, not just for the reading public in the 1960s, but for those of us who read it now and will read it for years to come. In 1966 in England there were probably only a handful or two of people practicing the more advanced aspects of Tibetan Buddhism, and most of those had only a marginal idea of what they were doing. Yet he included detailed information about many aspects of Tibetan Buddhism that were esoteric at the time but which are now well understood by Western practitioners.

Beyond that, as far as the communist occupation and his escape are concerned, the author narrated the outer events in *Born in Tibet* in such a way that the reader can enter very directly into this time of uncertainty and chaos and can experience what it was like not to know if your world

10. Letter from Richard Arthure to Carolyn Rose Gimian, December 2001.

was about to be destroyed; not to know if you should go or stay; not to know if the invaders were friends, neutral, or enemies; not to know if one should take the left or the right fork in the road, one of which would lead to freedom, the other to capture—not to know but to have to choose over and over again. The drama and the tension in *Born in Tibet* make this compelling to read; it still speaks to the ambiguity of human experience, in which the choices we make may be of great consequence, even when the way ahead is murky.

Born in Tibet was also significant because, for a very long time, it appeared to be the only available record of Trungpa Rinpoche's early life and his teachings in Tibet. It is now known that he composed over a thousand pages of writings while in Tibet and that, as a young tulku, he had already found several important termas. These were left behind when he fled the country, as was the history of the kingdom of Shambhala that he was writing during his escape. According to one story, he left it hidden near a high pass in the Himalayas. Until recently, all of these materials were believed to have been lost, destroyed during the communist Chinese invasion of the country.

Although he received occasional letters and news from Tibet, Trungpa Rinpoche was never able to return there. It was only after his death that a connection to Surmang Dütsi Tel, his main monastery, was reestablished by the Western sangha. One of Trungpa Rinpoche's students, Lee Weingrad, traveled to the monastery in September 1987, five months after Rinpoche's death, and has led many groups of Westerners there in subsequent years. Rinpoche's eldest son, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, then led an official delegation to Surmang in the summer of 2001. During his visit, the Sakyong was given nearly four hundred pages of texts that Trungpa Rinpoche composed before leaving Tibet. Mipham Rinpoche received this material from Trungpa Rinpoche's nephew, Karma Senge Rinpoche—who, in the aftermath of the communist occupation, traveled around the Surmang area gathering everything he could find of Trungpa Rinpoche's writings to preserve these texts for future practitioners. In time, much of this material will be translated and made available to English-language readers.

The second volume that is included in Volume One of *The Collected Works* is *Meditation in Action*, which was published in 1969 by Vincent Stuart and John M. Watkins. The material in the book dates from talks given at Samye Ling Meditation Center in Eskdalemuir, Scotland, by

Rinpoche in 1967 and 1968, before his transformative vision at Taktsang. There is a simplicity and a purity of thought that have made this little book an enduring classic on meditation and the path of the bodhisattva. This is the first book based on transcripts of audio recordings of the author's lectures. The great majority of his subsequent publications have been based on transcripts of lectures, his poetry being of course the major exception. That he—and other important Buddhist lineage holders—came to the West at a time when the technology existed to easily record the human voice was an accident, but an extremely fortuitous coincidence. The teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha were remembered and written down by his major disciples, and that tradition of students passing on the words of their teachers from memory was a main vehicle for the transmission of the Buddhist teachings for many centuries. At the time that the historical Buddha lived, the culture was much more attuned to that kind of oral transmission. Had the preservation of Chögyam Trungpa's dharma teachings relied purely on the memory of his Western students, I think it is fair to say that a great number of the teachings would have been lost or strangely altered. So we can be grateful that the arrival in the West of so many great Buddhist masters coincided with a technology uniquely suited to preserve their words.

For the transcription and editing of *Meditation in Action*, thanks are due to its editor Richard Arthure and other English students of Rinpoche's who worked on the manuscript. Richard was with Rinpoche when he composed *The Sadhana of Mahamudra* at Takstang in Bhutan and worked closely with Rinpoche on the translation of that text.[11] Of the genesis of *Meditation in Action*, Richard tells us:

> The idea of putting together a book, based on talks given by Rinpoche mostly in 1967, arose in conversation between the Vidyadhara and myself, probably early in 1968. I thought it would help in making more people aware of what an extraordinary teacher Rinpoche was and, in particular, that it would draw more people to the Dharma and to Samye-Ling. I selected the material and set about transcribing and editing the talks that I thought would hang together to make up

11. A section of the sadhana appears in Volume Five of *The Collected Works*, along with an article about the meaning of the sadhana, "Space and Energy," reprinted from *The Shambhala Sun* magazine.

> a book. It was solitary and labor-intensive work. For transcribing, I had an old reel-to-reel tape recorder and the first draft was written out by hand and then typed double-spaced on a Hermes typewriter. The challenge was to transform Rinpoche's spoken words into clear and elegant English prose. Even then, he had a fairly extensive and ever-growing vocabulary in English, but his sentence construction and grammar were rather sketchy and unorthodox. . . .
>
> I worked on the book for about four months in the Spring of 1968 in between bouts of intensive ngöndro practice.[12] I wanted to finish both before Rinpoche and I left for India and Bhutan, which was late June or early July of 1968. I had no idea what the title of the book would be until after the manuscript was finished. I remember there was some discussion as to whether it should be *Meditation and Action* or *Meditation in Action*. In retrospect, it seems self-evident that *Meditation in Action* is a much better title, but it wasn't quite so obvious then as it is now with hindsight. Robert Bly happened to be visiting Samye-Ling at the time that I was putting together the final typescript. He very kindly reviewed it and suggested a handful of minor changes, mostly in the matter of punctuation. . . . The corrected proofs were sent to Stuart and Watkins only days before [Rinpoche and I departed] . . . for India, and so it happened that the book came out in England when both of us were thousands of miles away.[13]

Although *Meditation in Action* differs from most of Trungpa Rinpoche's later works in its style, being from the period before he met the energy of Padmasambhava, "the Great Wrathful One," in Bhutan, it already demonstrates a particular gift that made him uniquely suited to present the buddhadharma in the West. In an early unpublished diary, which he wrote in England in 1966 to 1968, he himself delineates this quality: "In particular, my own situation is due to the fact that no one [else] could understand everything all together—both worldly and spiritual views and how to live one's life. This is not to say that I am more skilled, more learned, and more experienced in the dharma. There are many people who are more learned than I and more elevated in their wisdom. However, I have never made a separation between the spiritual

12. The practices preliminary to receiving abhisheka, or vajrayana empowerment. See the introduction to Volume Five of *The Collected Works* for a discussion of ngöndro.

13. Letter from Richard Arthure to Carolyn Rose Gimian, December 2001.

and the worldly. If you understand the ultimate aspect of the dharma, this is the ultimate aspect of the world. And if you should cultivate the ultimate aspect of the world, this should be in harmony with the dharma. I am alone in presenting the tradition of thinking this way."[14]

This ability to seamlessly bring together spiritual and temporal experiences and to point to the sacredness in our experiences in everyday life is one of the aspects of Chögyam Trungpa's exposition of the dharma that made him so accessible and so helpful to Western practitioners. *Meditation in Action* already shows this understanding to be well developed, which is one reason that it has remained popular more than thirty years after it was published.

Another auspicious juncture that coincided with the appearance of *Meditation in Action* was that, through the book's publication, Trungpa Rinpoche made the acquaintance of Samuel Bercholz and Shambhala Publications. Vincent Stuart, of Stuart and Watkins who published the book in England, was, in addition to being an English publisher of some note, a student of the teachings of Gurdjieff. He and Sam Bercholz got to know each other through mutual interests in things literary and spiritual, and through Vincent, Sam came into contact with the work of Chögyam Trungpa. In 1969 Sam, then in his early twenties, and a friend, Michael Fagan, decided to start a company dedicated to publishing works on spirituality from the world's great religious traditions. Their first acquisition was the rights to *Meditation in Action* for the American market. As Sam Bercholz tells us: "*Meditation in Action* was originated by Vincent Stuart at Stuart and Watkins, and co-published simultaneously in the United States by Shambhala as its first published title. Shambhala took a 1,000-copy run-on of the British edition of 1,000 copies."[15]

Sam was familiar with some of the stories about an enlightened kingdom called Shambhala, hidden away in the Himalayas, and he was attracted to the ideals of this enlightened society, so he decided to name his company Shambhala Publications. When Trungpa Rinpoche found out the name of the American company that had acquired the rights to his book, he was intrigued. He himself had a strong connection to the Buddhist teachings connected with Shambhala and had, as noted above,

14. From "Chogyam's Diary," unpublished manuscript. Translated from the Tibetan by John Rockwell. Used by permission of Diana J. Mukpo.

15. E-mail communication from Samuel Bercholz to Carolyn Gimian, January 1, 2002.

been writing a spiritual history of this kingdom when he was traveling out of Tibet. When he arrived in North America in 1970, among the first people he contacted were Sam Bercholz and his wife, Hazel, who along with Michael and Joann Fagan helped host his first teaching tour in California. All four of them became Rinpoche's students. Michael left the publishing company several years later; Sam remains the Editor-in-Chief of Shambhala Publications, which has been the main publisher for the writings of Chögyam Trungpa in the United States for more than thirty years now. He became one of Rinpoche's close disciples and has continued, not only to publish his work, but to propagate his teachings through his own lectures and seminars.

Mudra, the third book in Volume One, was the first book by Chögyam Trungpa for which Shambhala Publications was the original publisher. It was also the first of his books edited by Michael H. Kohn, also known as Sherab Chödzin, who has worked on many books by Chögyam Trungpa since that time. In addition to the poetry mentioned above, there are two translations of texts on the practice of dzogchen, or maha ati, as Trungpa Rinpoche preferred to call it. Richard Arthure worked on shaping the English versions of these two texts. An essay on the Buddhist path entitled "The Way of the Buddha" is also included in *Mudra*. It was first published in *Garuda I*, a small in-house magazine started by Rinpoche's American students. (A version of the same article appeared in the magazine *Chakra: A Journal of Tantra and Yoga*.) There are several accounts of the history of this article. According to Richard Arthure: "It's my recollection, though I can't be one hundred percent sure, that the first time Rinpoche presented an outline of the path in terms of the nine yanas [stages] was in April 1971 at a month-long retreat in a log cabin near Phelps, Wisconsin. Tania [Leontov] and I attended this retreat with Trungpa Rinpoche. There were no other visitors. . . . During this retreat Rinpoche dictated a fairly long and detailed account of the entire nine-yana path, and 'The Way of the Buddha' essay may have been a condensed version of that." John Baker separately informed me that Rinpoche dictated "The Way of the Buddha" to him and Marvin Casper, in connection with their work as editors on *Garuda I*. John writes:

> I'll mention one other major piece of editing that I participated in: the first *Garuda*, and especially the article "The Way of the Buddha,"

> which I have always felt is quite amazing. Rinpoche had not been teaching the Vajrayana yet when he dictated this article to us, sitting at a kitchen table in his house in Four Mile Canyon in Boulder. He was battling spiritual materialism in America, with the emphasis on cynicism, not going on "trips," [and the development of] the proper relationship with the teacher and toward the teachings. So when he dictated this extraordinary article (he spoke, I wrote down his words, Marvin and I questioning and editing as he went), I was somewhat stunned and asked him if it was all right, did he really want suddenly to start giving out information on tantra, especially such shocking and esoteric information. He giggled and said that, if people read it and were seduced into coming to him hoping for exotic and magical teachings, it would be all right because we would just make them sit. I can see him laughing about it at the Formica table, looking at me.
>
> One other extraordinary moment which occurred during the creation of that piece: after he had finished, he said of Maha Ati that the experience of the end of the path, the last evolution of enlightenment, is lonely, "like a lone wolf, standing on a ridge in the moonlight, howling at the moon." That image for the end of the path has stayed with me all these years.[16]

These two accounts may complement each other. It is possible that Rinpoche began shaping the ideas while in retreat, that he then dictated the article for inclusion in *Garuda*, and that from there it was reedited for inclusion in *Mudra*.

Finally, ink paintings by Tomikichiro Tokuriki, of the Ox-Herding Pictures—a well-known Zen representation of mind training—are reproduced in *Mudra* with Chögyam Trungpa's commentary, which John Baker also had a hand in preparing. Rinpoche also relates these drawings to the nine yanas in Tibetan Buddhism. Trungpa Rinpoche concludes that "the final realization of Zen automatically leads to the wisdom of Maha Ati," which is the highest achievement on the path according to Tibetan tradition.

Already, in *Mudra*, his modest entrance into American book publishing, Rinpoche stands out as both an ecumenical figure and an iconoclast. Surely, he is the first Buddhist teacher to correlate Zen and Tibetan Bud-

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16. E-mail communication from John Baker to Carolyn Rose Gimian, February 17, 2002.

dhism in this way. In June 1970 when he visited California, Rinpoche made a very pivotal connection with the founder of Zen Center San Francisco, Shunryu Suzuki Roshi. The two teachers, by all accounts, had a profound meeting of minds. Rinpoche and Roshi started making great plans to do things together, but these did not mature, as Roshi was diagnosed with liver cancer soon after they met and died in December 1971.[17] Nevertheless, Rinpoche's respect for the Zen tradition was immense. Some of the emphasis that he put on the sitting practice of meditation, which became one of the trademarks of his teaching in America, grew out of his respect for the practice environment created by Suzuki Roshi. During Rinpoche's lifetime, Roshi's picture was always on the Buddhist shrines in Rinpoche's Buddhist centers.

There is one other notable fact about *Mudra*: Chögyam Trungpa's use of the term "egolessness" on page 411 is noted in the second edition of *The Oxford English Dictionary*, under the entry for the word *ego*. Trungpa Rinpoche, one can be sure, would have been delighted that he was quoted in the OED, a book that he treated with the greatest respect and regarded as *the* authority on the English language. Beyond that, this mention in the OED is an indication of the great and groundbreaking effect he had on the terminology adopted by Buddhism in the West in the twentieth century, of which there will be more said in the introductions to other volumes of *The Collected Works*.

Of the articles originally published in *The Middle Way* that are included in Volume One, a little has been said above, about how they show the development of Trungpa Rinpoche's grasp of Western language and thought. They include many teachings on compassion and the practice of the bodhisattva path, including a discussion of the six paramitas, the subject that also forms the foundation of *Meditation in Action*. Two articles on the history of Buddhism in Tibet contain unique information not duplicated in any other writings by Chögyam Trungpa.

Additionally, three other articles are included in Volume One of *The Collected Works*. "The Way of Maha Ati" is an exposition of some of the teachings of dzogchen or atiyoga, the most advanced stage of practice in the nine yanas of Tibetan Buddhism. The article contains the earliest

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17. For an account of and commentary on their meetings, see David Chadwick, *Crooked Cucumber: The Life and Zen Teaching of Shunryu Suzuki* (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2000), pp. 373–75.

meditation instruction by Trunpga Rinpoche ever to appear in print. It is notable that this instruction is similar to the meditation instructions that he gave to his beginning, as well as advanced, students in North America, throughout most of his seventeen years teaching there. Michael Hookham, the editor of this piece (who now uses his dharma name, Rigdzin Shikpo), provided the following information on the genesis of this article and the confusion that arose with its original publication:

> Trungpa Rinpoche gave the Maha-Ati teachings in this text directly to me from his personal inspiration; they weren't translated from Tibetan, but emerged from his insight, based, I'm sure, on traditional Dzogchen upadesa [instruction or teaching]. I wrote them down over a period of time with Rinpoche's guidance and encouragement, linking them together using his terminology. The text was probably completed in 1968 at Biddulph Old Hall, shortly before Rinpoche left for India. Some time later the text was translated into Tibetan so that Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche could check what was said; as far as I know he approved. Thus there seems to have been a textual translation involved, but remarkably it was from English into Tibetan!
>
> After Rinpoche left Britain, some copies of the text found their way into hands other than those of his students. It was published in part by Dr. John Crook in his *The Yogins of Ladakh* and more completely in Chime Yungdung's magazine *Vajra*. This latter version was photocopied and circulated within Vajradhatu [the main organization founded by Trungpa Rinpoche in the United States]. Unfortunately the text was incorrectly described in *Vajra* as a translation made by Rinpoche and me; there was also confusion in places between the main text and the interleaved commentary and the title was changed to "Maha-Ati."
>
> Alone this might not have mattered too much, but in the *Shambhala Sun* of September 1998 and subsequently in the *Shambhala Sun* website up to the present day, a new version of the text appeared, full of arbitrary, idiosyncratic editorial changes. The *Vajra* version with its errors was used as the basis for this . . . revision.
>
> Rinpoche referred to the original text as self-secret, so it's probably suitable for a wider distribution than most Vajrayana texts, but I feel it's important to keep to Rinpoche's intention as closely as we

can. . . . It may help matters if the original text is published, so I have attached it to this e-mail.[18]

For *The Collected Works* Rigdzin Shikpo has provided the authoritative and original edition of this text. Its editor continues to live in Oxford, where he and Rinpoche originally met. He was one of Trungpa Rinpoche's early students in England and continued to study with him until Rinpoche's death. He was one of the first truly scholarly students that Rinpoche worked with, and he took voluminous notes on their conversations about many aspects of Buddhist doctrine and practice, particularly focused on the ati teachings. With encouragement from his teachers, he later founded the Longchen Foundation as a vehicle to further the study and practice of this tradition, and he continues to teach in England. Another article that he and Chögyam Trungpa worked on together, on teachings related to the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, appears in Volume Six of *The Collected Works*.

The next offering in Volume One is "The Meditation of Guru Rinpoche," which was published in *Chakra: A Journal of Tantra and Yoga* in 1971. This short practice text is identified in *Chakra* as a translation of a Tibetan sadhana by "Ven. Lama Trungpa Tulku." Rigdzin Shikpo, the editor of "The Way of Maha Ati," has also shed some light on the probable history of this text: ". . . the book *Diamond Light* contained the first version of the text Rinpoche called the *Guru Sadhana* (an Ati Guru Yoga of Guru Rinpoche). As far as I can tell, this must be the text you mean. Rinpoche created it from two Tibetan texts that he said were from the Longchen Nyingthik. I searched the Longchen Nyingthik for them, but with no success. It may be that the texts came from the Nyingthik Yabzhi. In any case, Rinpoche weaved the two texts together and translated the result into English in Oxford in 1965 or 1966, with the help of John Blackwood, a resident of Oxford who died in Egypt some years ago. In 1967 or 1968, probably at Biddulph Old Hall, Rinpoche and I retranslated the text into English with more Sanskrit and Dharma terminology and Rinpoche created a commentary for it."[19] Apparently, the short text that

18. E-mail and attachment from Rigdzin Shikpo to Carolyn Rose Gimian, February 10, 2002.

19. Ibid. The *Longchen Nyingthik* is a collection of writings—or termas, received teachings—by the famed Nyingma teacher Jigme Lingpa. The *Nyingthik Yabzhi*, mentioned in the next sentence, is a well-known and important collection of four dzogchen texts compiled by Longchen Rabjampa.

appears in Volume One of *The Collected Works* is part of a much larger undertaking.

An article entitled "The New Age," which first appeared in the *International Times* (*IT*) magazine in 1969, completes Volume One. *IT* was, according to Richard Arthure, "a popular underground paper in the '60s and '70s . . . published weekly in London." The article contains many intriguing ideas about society and politics, topics that continued to interest Chögyam Trungpa throughout his life. "The New Age" may be the first recorded germ of the Shambhala teachings, in English, that he concentrated on so much in the last ten years of his life.

Altogether, Volume One of *The Collected Works of Chögyam Trungpa* contains a varied and vibrant group of teachings. The pace of change in modern society is such that something written thirty years ago now may seem already almost archaic. These early writings of Chögyam Trungpa, however, are not just of interest as historical artifacts, for they convey timeless, always up-to-date wisdom. There is much to recommend the writings from these early years, and this editor hopes that they will continue to enlighten readers for many generations. At the same time, the contents of Volume One set the stage for the extraordinary pageant of dharma that lies ahead in future volumes.

CAROLYN ROSE GIMIAN
April 15, 2002
Trident Mountain House
Tatamagouche Mountain, Nova Scotia

BORN IN TIBET



drawn by Sherab Palden Beru

Center: *Marpa the Translator, father of the Kagyü school.*
Clockwise from top: *Vajradhara Buddha with two Indian gurus, Gampopa, Mahakala (the Protector), Karmapa, Vajra Yogini (female divinity), and Milarepa.*
DRAWN BY SHERAB PALDEN BERU.

Foreword to the 1995 Edition

When I think back upon my father's life, it amazes me how much he accomplished in such a short time. He was only forty-eight years old when he passed away, but within that time, the experiences he had and the people he encountered were as varied and rich as if he had lived for hundreds of years.

Often people would ask him how he was able to adapt to so many diverse cultures, and how he was able to deal with the tremendous hardships of his life. Always his answer would be that it was due to the rigorous traditional training and education that he received in Tibet while he was young. It might appear to the reader that the Tibet of Chögyam Trungpa's youth was medieval; it seems so distant from today's modern world, and so harsh. Ironically, however, it was that very training, with its simplicity and realness, that gave him the foundation that enabled him to relate with this modern world.

My father had two distinct roles in his life, corresponding with the periods of his life spent in the East and the West. During the first part of his life, since he was recognized as the incarnation of a famous teacher, people had high expectations of him. Many of the lamas and monks at the monastery were quite concerned that he be able to fit into his traditional role and continue the work of his predecessor. He very much had to fulfill the ambitions of the monastic community, as well as those of the laypeople of his religion.

Once he left Tibet, his role was quite different—almost totally the opposite. In the West, very few people knew much about Buddhism as a whole, and they knew even less about the role of a lama, a spiritual teacher. People had little basis for any kind of expectations. In many

ways, this was incredibly liberating for Chögyam Trungpa, and in fact it enabled him to become one of the most prominent Buddhist teachers of his time. His unique gift was that he was able to synthesize the ancient wisdom of Buddhism and transmit it to the West in a clear and concise way that was both meaningful and refreshing—so much so that a new generation of Western practitioners was born.

Born in Tibet is a unique book, one that I personally have always loved to read. It is not just a historical document, a book about Tibetan culture, but it reveals many subtleties of what that life was actually like. It shows the spiritual development of teacher and disciple, and it illustrates the humanness that everyone possesses, regardless of culture, and the politics that come about from that.

Even though my father was not particularly a nostalgic person, he had tremendous pride in his Tibetan heritage, which he transmitted to me in various ways. Occasionally in the middle of the night, we would prepare bandit soup together. This was one of his favorite Tibetan delicacies, which was simply raw meat with hot water poured over it.

Knowing the tremendous hardships and challenges that confronted Chögyam Trungpa, and how he was able to overcome them through his courage, humor, and his faith in the spiritual disciplines of Tibet, I have always found this book inspiring. I hope that you too may be inspired by his example, and that this book will continue to benefit numberless beings.

THE SAKYONG MIPHAM RINPOCHE
November 25, 1994
Karmê Chöling

Foreword to the 1977 Edition

Stories of escape have always enlisted the sympathy of normal human beings; no generous heart but will beat faster as the fugitives from civil or religious persecution approach the critical moment that will, for them, spell captivity or death, or else the freedom they are seeking. The present age has been more than usually prodigal in such happenings, if only for the reason that in this twentieth century of ours, for all the talk about "human rights," the area of oppression, whether as a result of foreign domination or native tyranny, has extended beyond all that has ever been recorded in the past. One of the side effects of modern technology has been to place in the hands of those who control the machinery of government a range of coercive apparatus undreamed of by any ancient despotism. It is not only such obvious means of intimidation as machine guns or concentration camps that count; such a petty product of the printing press as an identity card, by making it easy for the authorities to keep constant watch on everybody's movements, represents in the long run a still more effective curb on liberty. In Tibet, for instance, the introduction of such a system by the Chinese Communists, following the abortive rising of 1959, and its application to food rationing has been one of the principal means of keeping the whole population in subjection and compelling them to do the work decreed by their foreign overlords. Formerly Tibet was a country where, though simple living was the rule, serious shortage of necessities had been unknown: Thus, one of the most contented portions of the world has been reduced to misery, with many of its people, like the author of the present book, choosing exile rather than remain in their own homes under conditions

where no man, and especially no young person, is any longer allowed to call his mind his own.

Hostile propaganda, playing on slogan-ridden prejudice, has made much of the fact that a large proportion of the peasantry, in the old Tibet, stood in the relation of feudal allegiance to the great land-owning families or also to monasteries endowed with landed estates; it has been less generally known that many other peasants were small holders, owning their own farms, to whom must be added the nomads of the northern prairies, whose lives knew scarcely any restrictions other than those imposed by a hard climate and by the periodic need to seek fresh pasturage for their yaks and sheep. In fact all three systems, feudal tenure, individual peasant proprietorship and nomadism have always existed side by side in the Tibetan lands; of the former all one need say is that it naturally would depend, for its effective working, on the regular presence of the landowner and his family among their own people; in any such case, absenteeism is bound to sap the essential human relationship, bringing other troubles in its train. In central Tibet a tendency on the part of too many of the secular owners to stop in Lhasa, with occasional outings down to India, had latterly become apparent and this was to be accounted a danger sign; further east, in the country of Kham to which the author belongs, unimpaired patriarchal institutions prevailed as of old and no one wished things otherwise. Of the country as a whole it can be said that, generally speaking, the traditional arrangements worked in such a way that basic material needs were adequately met, life was full of interest at every social level, while the Buddhist ideal absorbed everyone's intellectual and moral aspirations at all possible degrees, from that of popular piety to spirituality of unfathomable depth and purity. By and large, Tibetan society was a unanimous society in which, however, great freedom of viewpoint prevailed and also a strong feeling for personal freedom which, however, did not conflict with, but was complementary to, a no less innate feeling for order.

At the same time, it must not be supposed that the Tibetans had developed—or had any occasion to develop—an ideology of liberty of the type familiar in the West: A Tibetan experiences freedom (like any other desirable state, moreover) "concretely," that is to say through his being rather than through its conceptual image in his thinking mind. The presence or absence of interference in his life tells him how far he is or is not a free man and he feels little need to call in abstract criteria for the sake

of defining his own condition. By nature and habit he is "down to earth," hence also his preference for an almost material phraseology when trying to express the most subtle metaphysical and spiritual truths; that is why our word *philosophy* is but rarely appropriate in a Tibetan context. Whatever a Tibetan undertakes, he will do it wholeheartedly and when the wish to do that thing leaves him he will banish it just as completely from his thoughts. The same holds good for the religious life; by comparison with many of us, an average Tibetan finds contemplative concentration, with its parallel exclusion of irrelevant thinking, easy: The reader need not be surprised, when he comes to the description of the author's early training under various teachers, at the unswerving single-mindedness shown by one so young. In Tibet this is a normal attitude for one of his kind.

Another characteristic common to Tibetans of all types, not unconnected with the ones already mentioned, is their love of trekking and camping. Every Tibetan seems to have a nomadic streak in him and is never happier than when moving, on ponyback or, if he is a poor man, on foot through an unpeopled countryside in close communion with untamed nature; rapid travel would be no travel, as far as this quality of experience is concerned. Here again, one sees how a certain kind of life helps to foster the habit of inward recollection as well as that sense of kinship with animals, birds, and trees which is so deeply rooted in the Tibetan soul.

Tibetans on the whole are strangers to the kind of sophistry that in one breath will argue in favor of human brotherhood and of the irresponsible exploitation of all man's fellow beings in order to serve that interest reduced to its most shortsightedly material aspect. As Buddhists they know that all are in the same boat, tossed together on the ocean of birth and death and subject to a selfsame fatality. Therefore, for those who understand this truth, compassion is indivisible; failure in one respect will, unfailingly, instill poison into everything else. This is not some abstruse idea reserved for monks or lamas; people of the humblest degree are aware of it, though the saints exemplify it more brightly. It is one of the great joys of being in Tibet to witness the results of this human attitude in the lack of fear displayed by bird and beast in all parts of the country. Admittedly most Tibetans, though averse to hunting or fishing, are meat eaters and could hardly be otherwise in a land of such prolonged winters where in any case the range of available foodstuffs is

very limited. Nevertheless this fact is accounted a cause for regret; no one tries to prove that it is completely innocent and devoid of spiritually negative results. It is a common practice for people to abstain from the fruit of slaughter on certain days, as a kind of token of intent; while anyone who succeeds in keeping off meat altogether, as in the case of certain lamas and ascetics, will invariably earn praise for doing so.

It is hard to believe that if such an atitude were more general the prospects of peace on Earth would not be that much brighter. If one wishes to pull up the taproot of war one has to seek it at a level far deeper than that of social or political events. Every Tibetan faithful to his tradition knows this plainly; it is only when he adopts the ways of our civilization that he will begin to forget this truth, together with many other things.

It may perhaps now help the reader to be told something about the historical background of the present story, with particular emphasis on such events as affected conditions in eastern Tibet during the period just prior to the time when the author's personal narrative starts.

After the Chinese Revolution of 1912, when the Manchu dynasty fell, the suzerainty the Emperor had exercised in this country (since 1720) was repudiated by the Tibetans; Chinese influence in Tibet had in any case been dwindling all through the nineteenth century. Not long before the fall of the Manchus, their last viceroy in the westerly Chinese province of Szechuan, Chao Erfeng, a hard and ambitious man, made an attempt (the first of its kind) to bring Tibet under direct Chinese administration; his troops occupied Lhasa in 1910. When the empire collapsed, however, giving way to a republic, the Tibetans rose and drove out the Chinese garrisons from the two central provinces of Ü and Tsang; Tibetan national independence in its latest phase dates from that time. Moreover, a further extension of the territory governed from Lhasa took place in 1918, when Tibetan forces succeeded in occupying the western part of Kham which thenceforth remained as a province of Tibet with its administrative center at Chamdo, a place often referred to in the pages to follow.

The new Sino-Tibetan boundary consequently ran through the middle of the Khampa country, with people of Tibetan race, that is to say, dwelling on both sides of it; but paradoxically it was those districts that remained nominally under China that enjoyed the most untrammelled independence in practice. Occasional interference from neighboring Chi-

nese "warlords" apart, the local principalities, akin to small Alpine cantons, which provided the typical form of organization for a valley, or complex of valleys, in this region were left so free to manage their own affairs that people there must have been practially unconscious of, and equally indifferent to, the fact that, in the atlases of the world, their lands were colored yellow as forming part of greater China. Under these conditions, which went back a long time, the Khampas had developed a peculiar sense of local independence which needs to be understood if one is to grasp the significance of many of the events mentioned in this book.

By comparison with the districts still attached to China, the part of Kham governed by Lhasa-appointed officials felt, if anything, less free; which does not mean, however, that the Khampas were lacking in loyalty to the Dalai Lama, as spiritual sovereign of all the Tibetan peoples: They were second to none in this respect. Only they did not see why an unbounded devotion to his sacred person need imply any willingness to surrender jealously treasured liberties at the bidding of others acting in his name. In their own country the Khampas much preferred the authority of their own chieftains ("kings" as the author describes them), personally known to everyone; laws or levies imposed from a distant center was not a thing of which they could recognize the necessity, for their own valleys had always run their own affairs quite successfully on the basis of a self-contained economy and from their point of view nothing was to be gained, and much lost, by exchanging the old, homely arrangements for control by the nominees of a capital that lay in another province far to the west. Besides, some of the governors sent to Chamdo made matters worse by extorting from the local inhabitants more perquisites than what long-established custom would sanction. When the Chinese invaded Tibet in October 1950 they were at first able to exploit these discontents in their own favor by saying they would put an end to the exactions of the Tibetan officials. It was not till afterward that the clansmen of those parts realized, too late, that the change from capricious harassment to a meticulously calculated squeezing had not worked out to their advantage. It is hardly surprising that when eventually popular exasperation at Communist interference broke out in armed revolt it was the Khampas who bore the brunt of the patriotic movement and provided its most daring leaders.

* * *

It is hoped that enough has now been said by way of setting the stage for the Lama Trungpa's reminiscences: Those are given with typically Tibetan matter-of-factness; he neither tries to feed the reader with opinions nor does he, for the sake of logical coherence, introduce information gathered after the event; the inevitable gaps in one man's experience are left, just as they were, unfilled. All the author does is to relate whatever he himself saw, heard, and said; as each day brought its fresh needs and opportunities, he describes how he tried to act, adding nothing and omitting nothing—the lama obviously has a most retentive memory for detail. Surely this way of presenting facts makes the documentary value of such a chronicle all the greater, illustrating, as it does, all the hesitations and uncertainties of a situation no one was prepared for, the doubts, the changes of plan, the conflicts of advice, out of which gradually grows the firm resolve, carrying out of which forms the second and most dramatic part of the book.

The first appearance of the Communists on what previously seemed like an idyllic sense is typical, it occurs almost casually: When they turn up one day people ask themselves what this means, but when nothing very unpleasant happens—none of the expected looting by the soldiers, for instance—everyone soon settles down again to his usual preoccupations. The soldiers pass on; the incident is half-forgotten. It is only some pages later that one discovers them again, first just across the Tibetan frontier at Chamdo, and long afterward in occupation of Lhasa, but how they got there one is not told. After a time one guesses that Tibet has capitulated, but is given few details simply because those actually involved in these events were often too cut off in their own locality to obtain a bird's-eye view; we in England, watching the international scene from afar were, in some respects, better able to build up a general picture.

In fact, as the book shows, it was by no means easy for people in those remote districts immediately to form clear ideas about the nature of the new order in China. Moreover this also partly explains why the Tibetan government itself, while the Communist threat was developing, was rather hesitating in its reactions; a temporizing policy, so often resorted to by small nations facing pressure from a great power, may well have seemed preferable to crying Tibet's wrongs from the housetops regardless of consequences. The Lhasa government has been criticized, with a certain justice, for lack of initiative in face of a danger calling for

swift decisions; but it is only fair to make considerable allowance for circumstances, material and psychological, that were inherent in the situation from the very start of the crisis.

The above remarks have somewhat anticipated on the sequence of events. The point I am trying to make is that it necessarily took some time before the author, young as he was, or his senior advisers were able to gather any precise impressions of what was to be expected under Communist rule. As the story unfolds we see an initial bewilderment gradually giving way to acute discomfort which in its turn becomes a sense of impending disaster. We hear that fighting has broken out in a certain valley, yet the adjoining valley may still be seemingly in enjoyment of its habitual calm, with everyone there intent on peaceful tasks—adding a wing to the local temple perhaps or preparing for the reception of a revered spiritual master. Eventually, however, the more wide-awake characters in the book begin to realize that this is no passing crisis: Tibet and its cherished way of life are facing a catastrophe without parallel in the past, one that no policy of "wait and see" will enable one to live down. It is a time for far-reaching decisions if certain values, as well as one's own life, are to be preserved: Here again, one is allowed to see into the conflict of outlook between those who cling to the belief that this trouble, like others before it, will blow over if only people will have the patience to sit tight and those others who think that their imperative duty is to carry whatever they can of Tibet's spiritual heritage to someplace where the flickering spark can be rekindled in freedom; flight to India, the Buddha's native land, seems the only remedy left to them. These two much-canvassed points of view become focused, in this story, in the persons of the author himself and his elderly bursar, a well-meaning man not wanting in devotion, but typical of the mentality that is forever fighting shy of any solution that looks like becoming irrevocable. There is much pathos to be gathered from these repeated encounters between youthful virility ready to take the plunge and inbred caution for which "stick to familiar ways and wait" is the universal maxim to fit every unprecedented emergency.

About the actual escape there is no call to speak here, except by remarking that at least one reader, while following this part of the story, has been repeatedly reminded of those young British officers of the late nineteenth century who found themselves launched by fate into positions of unusual responsibility at remote outposts of the empire: One

meets here the same readiness to take crucial decisions time and again, the same light-hearted spirit maintained over long periods of suspense and danger, and in more critical moments, a similar capacity for instilling courage into the timid and endurance into the weak by the well-turned appeal, the timely sally—all these qualities were displayed by the chief actor in this drama in a completely unself-conscious manner.

But after making this comparison, one still has to admit a certain difference, itself due to a very great difference in the respective backgrounds. This can be summed up in the fact that in the one case, aptitude for leadership rests on an acceptance of what are predominantly "Stoic" loyalties and values—Marcus Aurelius would have shared them gladly—whereas in the other, it is from the heart of contemplation that this strength is drawn forth; the center of allegiance lies there, thus endowing whatever action has to be taken under pressure of necessity with an unmistakable flavor of "inwardness." It is the lama who, speaking through the man, delivers his message and that is why, over and above its human and historical interest, this book has also to be treated as a Buddhist document in which much may be discovered by those who have the instinct to read between the lines. It is noticeable that whenever a pause in the action occurs there is an almost automatic withdrawal back into contemplation; the mind wastes no time in dwelling on its anxieties but finds within its own solitude, as well as in the stillness of nature, the means of refreshment and renewal.

That a mind so attuned should harbor no enmity in return for injuries received seems only logical; in this respect the present history may well be left to speak for itself. Buddhism has always had much to say, not only about "compassion" as such, but also about what might be called its "intellectual premises," failing which that virtue can so easily give way to a passional benevolence that may even end up in hatred and violence; this has been the persistent weakness of worldly idealists and of the movements they promoted. For compassion (or Christian charity for that matter) to be truly itself it requires its intellectual complement which is dispassion or detachment: a hard saying for the sentimentalists. Though feeling obviously has a place there too, it can never afford to bypass intelligence—as if anything could do that with impunity! This is a point which Buddhism brings out with implacable insistence: From its point of view compassion must be looked upon as a dimension of knowledge; the two are inseparable, as husband and wife. All this belongs to

the basic tenets of the *mahayana* or "great way," of which the Tibetan tradition itself is an offshoot; Tibetan art is filled with symbolic delineations of this partnership. It is important for the reader to be made aware of the fact that these ideas pervade the entire background of the author's thinking, otherwise he will miss many of the finer touches.

It would be ungrateful to terminate this introduction to a remarkable book without some reference to the lady who helped the Lama Trungpa to put down his memories on paper, Mrs. Cramer Roberts; in fact, but for her encouragement in the first place, the work might never have been begun. In interpreting what the lama told her of his experiences she wisely did not try and tamper with a characteristically Tibetan mode of expression beyond the minimum required by correct English; in all other respects the flavor of the author's thought has been preserved in a manner that will much increase the reader's ability to place himself, imaginatively, in the minds and feelings of those who figure in the narrative; a more inflected style, normal with us, could so easily have covered up certain essential things. For the fine sense of literary discernment she has shown we all have to thank Mrs. Cramer Roberts, as also for the unstinting devotion she brought to her self-appointed task.

MARCO PALLIS

Acknowledgments

THIS BOOK WAS BEGUN spontaneously as an authentic record of the wisdom and culture which existed in Tibet for so many centuries, and of the events of the last decade during which the Communists have destroyed everything its peace-loving people held dear.

Living in East Tibet the author was a witness of these tragic happenings of which the world outside is largely ignorant.

We would like to offer our grateful thanks to Mr. Gerald Yorke and Mr. Marco Pallis for the great help that they have given us to bring the book to completion. Mr. Yorke saw the script in its early stages, and not only introduced it to the publishers, but made many useful suggestions. Mr. Pallis when consenting to write the foreword, devoted many weeks to the work of finally putting the book in order.

We also thank Lieut. Colonel F. Spencer Chapman and Major G. Sherrif for allowing us to use some of their Tibetan photographs.

CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA
ESMÉ CRAMER ROBERTS
February 1966
Oxford

How to Pronounce Tibetan Names and Words

A SIMPLIFIED GUIDE

IT IS OBVIOUSLY impracticable here to aim at the kind of accuracy that would satisfy an expert in phonetics: The use of numerous small additional signs, for instance, such as one finds in serious grammars, would complicate the issue too much for ordinary readers. Therefore one must try to limit oneself to whatever the Latin alphabet, coupled with a few rather rough and ready explanations, will give; in fact, a reasonable approximation can be obtained by this means, as is the case with most foreign languages; the reader should find no trouble in applying the following hints concerning Tibetan pronunciation.

Vowel sounds: These include the five open vowels, *a, e, i, o, u* which should be sounded as in Italian: A final *e* should never be muted, it is open like the rest; the Tibetan name *Dorje* does *not* rhyme with "George"; in French it would be written as "Dorjé."

To the above five should be added two modified vowels, *ö* and *ü;* these should be pronounced as in German.

These seven sounds give the complete vowel range.

Consonant sounds: Here the problem of transcription is somewhat more difficult. The prevailing dialects of Central Tibet, where the capital Lhasa is situated, and of eastern Tibet where the author belongs, contain a number of consonant sounds which, to a European ear, sound almost alike; there are, for instance, two kinds of *k,* two of *t,* and so on. Short of using an elaborate system of diacritic marks, puzzling to a nonscholar, one is compelled to make do, in many cases, with a single letter where Tibetans would use two. The reader need not be troubled with these fine distinctions.

In the case of aspirated consonants such as *kh, th,* and so on *both* letters have to be sounded separately; they do not fuse to make an entirely new consonant as in the English word *the* for instance, or the Greek name *Thetis. Sh, ch* should, however, be sounded as in English.

Note: There is no sound like our *f* in Tibetan. *Ph,* whenever it occurs, follows the rule as above, i.e. both letters are sounded as in *map house.*

Special attention must be drawn to combinations such as *tr, dr* in Tibetan: The author's name, Trungpa, is a case in point. The fact is that the *r* is not sounded independently; it only affects the preceding *t* or *d* by lending to it a slightly "explosive" character. What one has to do, in these cases, is to press the tongue hard against the palate, while sounding *t* or *d* as the case may be; it sometimes helps to *think* of an *r* while so doing. (In Tibetan quite a number of such letters exist, such as *gr, tr, br,* etc., which are all pronounced similarly; but obviously this aspect of the matter will only concern students of Tibetan who, in any case, will use the Tibetan alphabet.)

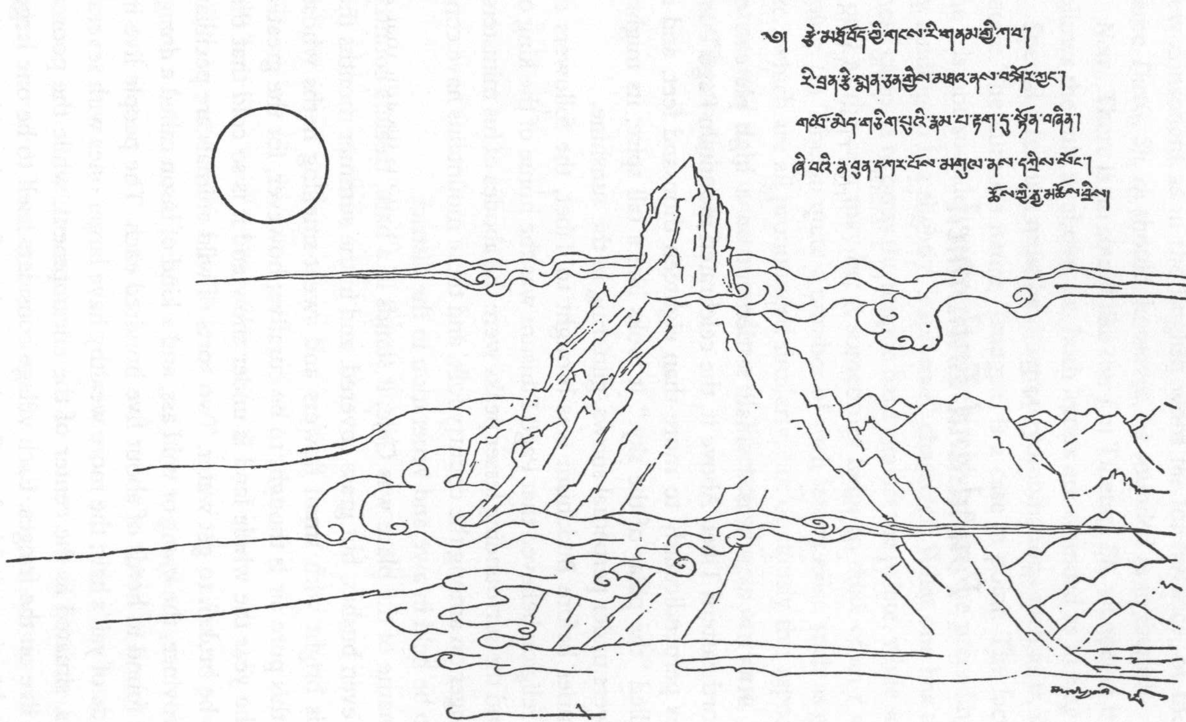
ONE

Found and Enthroned

MY BIRTHPLACE was a small settlement on a high plateau of northeastern Tibet. Above it, the celebrated mountain Pagö Pünsum rises perpendicularly to more than eighteen thousand feet, and is often called "the pillar of the sky." It looks like a tall spire; its mighty crest towers under perpetual snows, glittering in the sunshine.

Centuries before Buddhism was brought to Tibet, the followers of the Bön religion believed that Pagö Pünsum was the home of the king of spirits, and the surrounding lesser peaks were the abodes of his ministers. Myths linger on among the country folk, and these mountains have continued to be held in awe and veneration in the district.

The name of the place was Geje; it stands in a bare, treeless country without even bushes, but grass covered, and in the summer months the ground is bright with small flowers and sweet-smelling herbs whose scent in this pure air is thought to be curative; however, for the greater part of the year the whole land is under snow and it is so cold that the ice must be broken to get water. Two sorts of wild animals are peculiar to this province, the *kyang* or wild ass, and a kind of bison called a *drong;* both are found in herds of about five hundred each. The people live in tents made of yak's hair; the more wealthy have larger ones with several partitions, situated in the center of the encampment, while the poorer peasants live on the fringes. Each village considers itself to be one large family, and in the individual family, the members from the oldest to the youngest live together and own their herds of yaks and sheep in common.



Mount Pagö Pünsum.

The fire, used for all domestic purposes, is always in the middle of the tent, and the shrine is in the far right-hand corner with a butter lamp burning continually before a religious picture, or a set of the scriptures.

This northern area of East Tibet is called Nyishu-tsa-nga, and has twenty-five districts; the name simply means "twenty-five." At one time it was under a king who gave the district where Geje is situated the special privilege of having its highlanders chosen for his bodyguard on account of their courage.

Geje was a small community of only about five hundred people. My father, Yeshe Dargye, owned a little land there; he met his future wife, Tungtso Drölma, when she was working for her relations, looking after the yaks and milking the females, which are called *dris*. They had one daughter, but when a second child was already in her womb he left her, and she married again, this time a much poorer man who, when the child was born, accepted him as his son.

The night of my conception my mother had a very significant dream that a being had entered her body with a flash of light; that year flowers bloomed in the neighborhood although it was still winter, to the surprise of the inhabitants.

During the New Year festival on the day of the full moon, in the Earth Hare year according to the Tibetan calendar (February 1939) I was born in the cattle byre; the birth came easily. On that day a rainbow was seen in the village, a pail supposed to contain water was unaccountably found full of milk, while several of my mother's relations dreamt that a lama was visiting their tents. Soon afterward, a lama from Tashi Lhaphuk Monastery came to Geje; as he was giving his blessing to the people, he saw me, who at that time was a few months old; he put his hand over my head to give me a special blessing, saying that he wanted me for his monastery and that I must be kept very clean and always be carefully looked after. Both my parents agreed to this, and decided that when I grew older I should be sent to his monastery, where my mother's uncle was a monk.

After the death in 1938 of the tenth Trungpa Tulku, the supreme abbot of Surmang, the monks at once sent a representative to His Holiness Gyalwa Karmapa, the head of the Karma Kagyü school whose monastery lay near Lhasa. Their envoy had to inform him of the death of the last abbot and to ask him if he had had any indication where his reincar-

nation would be found. They begged him to let them know at once should he obtain a vision.

Some months later Gyalwa Karmapa was visiting Palpung Monastery in the province of Derge in Kham, which is Tibet's eastern region. Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche, who had been a devoted disciple of the tenth Trungpa Tulku and lived at Palpung, also asked him not to defer giving any possible indication, for the monks of Surmang were feeling lost without their abbot and were eager that his reincarnation should be found without delay.

A vision had in fact come to Gyalwa Karmapa, who dictated a letter to his private secretary, saying that the reincarnation of the tenth Trungpa Tulku has been born in a village five days' journey northward from Surmang. Its name sounds like two words *Ge* and *De;* there is a family there with two children; the son is the reincarnation. It all sounded rather vague; however, the secretary and monks of the Dütsi Tel Monastery at Surmang were preparing to go in search of the few abbot when a second sealed letter was received at the monastery. Rölpa Dorje, the regent abbot of Dütsi Tel, called a meeting, opened the letter, and read it to the assembled monks. It said that Gyalwa Karmapa had had a second and much clearer vision: "The door of the family's dwelling faces south; they own a big red dog. The father's name is Yeshe Dargye and the mother's Chung and Tzo; the son who is nearly a year old is Trungpa Tulku." One senior monk and two others set off immediately to find me.

After five days' journey they reached the village of Geje, and called on all the more important families; they made a list of the names of those parents who had children of a year old, and returned to Dütsi Tel. The list was sent to Gyalwa Karmapa, who was still at Palpung. He found that the monks had merely taken names belonging to important families and said that they must go again and make further enquiries. On receipt of this message a second party of monks was sent to the village, which in the interval had removed to higher ground and changed its name to Dekyil: This time they called on every family and made a thorough search. In one tent they found a baby boy who had a sister and, as had been written in Gyalwa Karmapa's letter, the entrance faced south and there was a red dog. Also, the mother's name was Bo Chung, though her family called her Tungtso Drölma; thus her name confirmed Gyalwa Karmapa's vision, but the father's name was different from that in the letter, and this caused a great deal of confusion; yet they looked closely

at the baby, for as soon as he had seen them in the distance he waved his little hand and broke into smiles as they came in. So the monks felt that this must be the child and gave him the gifts which Gyalwa Karmapa had sent, the sacred protective cord (*sungdü*) and the traditional scarf (*khata*); this latter the baby took and hung round the monk's neck in the prescribed way, as if he had already been taught what was the right thing to do: Delighted, the monks picked me up, for that baby was myself, and I tried to talk.

The following day the monks made a further search in another part of the village, then returned to say good-bye. As they made prostration before me, I placed my hand on their heads as if I knew that I should give them my blessing, then the monks were certain that I was the incarnation of the tenth Trungpa. They spoke to my mother asking her to tell them in confidence who had been my father. She told them that I was the son of her first husband, Yeshe Dargye, but that I had always been known as the son of my stepfather. This made everything clear to the monks, who immediately returned to Dütsi Tel. The news was taken to Gyalwa Karmapa who was sure that I, the child of Tungtso Drölma, was the eleventh Trungpa Tulku.

Gyalwa Karmapa was about to leave Palpung Monastery on a tour in which Surmang would be included, and the monks realized that if he was to perform the ceremony of my enthronement it was necessary to bring me there immediately. Kargyen, the senior secretary of Dütsi Tel, with a party of monks came to my native village of Dekyil to fetch me. He had to proclaim his mission to the whole area and to consult all the heads of the villages and the representatives of the people, since ordinarily it was expected that they would demand land or money. However, everyone was cooperative and modest and no one asked for any gain for himself. Next, my parents had to be asked if they wished to live near Surmang, or would prefer to receive property in their own village. My parents decided that they would like to be given the land on which they lived; however, they told the secretary that at some future time they would be glad of permission to visit me at Surmang.

When these things were settled we set off, with both my parents traveling in the party, for they were anxious to see Surmang. My mother stayed on in a house near Dütsi Tel in order to look after me until I was five years old, but my stepfather returned to his village.

A messenger had been sent ahead to inform Dütsi Tel when we would arrive, and a great welcome was prepared. All the monks from Surmang and many from neighboring monasteries assembled some five miles distant from Dütsi Tel to form a procession to escort me. On that day the valley was misty, and a rainbow appeared in the sky forming an arch over the procession, but as we drew near the monastery the surrounding mists dissolved, and the low clouds spread like a canopy hiding us from distant onlookers.

At the monastery everything was in festival; all the monks were rejoicing. There were special ceremonies and a great feast was arranged. I have been told that, though I was only about thirteen months old at the time, I immediately recognized those monks in whom the tenth Trungpa Tulku had placed confidence, and that I behaved with the greatest decorum throughout the day and did not even cry once.

A few days later I was put through a test; pairs of several objects were put before me, and in each case I picked out the one that had belonged to the tenth Trungpa Tulku; among them were two walking sticks and two rosaries; also, names were written on small pieces of paper and when I was asked which piece had his name on it, I chose the right one. Now the monks were certain that I was the incarnation, so a letter was sent to Gyalwa Karmapa telling him the results of the examination and inviting him to officiate at my enthronement ceremony.

Every morning my mother brought me to the monastery and took me home with her in the evening. My earliest memory is being in a room with several monks who were talking to me, and I was answering them. I was told later that my first words were "OM MANI PADME HUM"; probably, I did not say them very correctly. When lamas came to visit me, I have been told that I used to clutch at their rosaries and try to imitate them. Every day that month, I held an audience and received visits from the friends and disciples of my past incarnation who took a great interest in me, and I always seemed to enjoy meeting people.

At the end of the month my enthronement ceremony was to take place, and so I was taken to the larger monastery of Namgyal Tse. This time, instead of the joyous informality with which I had been welcomed at Dütsi Tel, a procession came to escort me and everything was done with pomp and ceremony.

Gyalwa Karmapa arrived with some senior lamas from Palpung;

other people came from all parts of East Tibet: About one thousand Surmang monks and twelve thousand other monks and laity finally assembled. My monks were delighted, for this enthronement was to be one of the largest in living memory. There were several incarnate lamas already at Surmang including Garwang Tulku the regent abbot of Namgyal Tse. Rölpa Dorje the regent abbot of Dütsi Tel was appointed to act as my sponsor and give my responses at the enthronement. Both were regent abbots of their respective monasteries in the interregnum after the death of the tenth Trungpa and during my minority, and they remained so later when I was absent from Surmang.

Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche was the fifth incarnation of the great Rölpa Dorje, a contemporary of the fifth Trungpa Tulku, and he had been the teacher of Tai Situ Chökyi Jungne in the early part of the eighteenth century; the latter was the second most important lama in the Karma Kagyü school; *Tai Situ* is a Chinese title. He had written many scholarly works and had revived the pictorial art of the "Gardri school." His teaching had been widely disseminated in Tibet, China, and India.

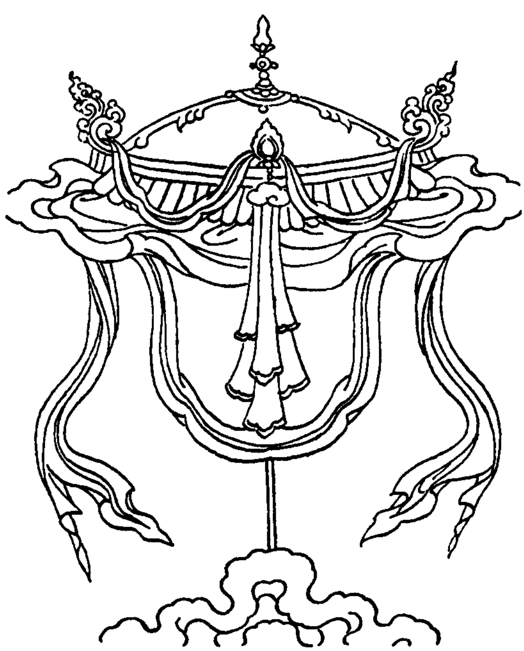
My enthronement took place in the large assembly hall. The lion throne *(seng tri)*, on which all *tulkus* are traditionally enthroned, stood at the farther end of the hall on a dais. It was made of gilt wood, square in shape, with white lions carved on the sides which appeared to be supporting it. On the throne there were three cushions, red, yellow, and blue, covered with two strips of brocade. A table was placed in front of it with all my seals of office. I was carried up the hall by the senior secretary of Dütsi Tel, escorted by a procession of the higher dignitaries. Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche stood at the foot of the throne, and my secretary handed me to him; he then mounted the dais and sat down in my place holding me on his lap and gave all the responses which should have come from me.

According to tradition, the service began with the rite of the primary *upasaka* ordination, the entrance to the Buddhist congregation. Gyalwa Karmapa cut my hair to symbolize a cutting away from the material, and entering the spiritual, life. Then the regent abbot spoke in my name.

From today I take refuge in the Buddha.
From today I take refuge in the dharma (the norm, embodied in the doctrine).
From today I take refuge in the sangha (the assembly or church both earthly and heavenly).

At the moment when he put the scissors to my hair there was a clap of thunder, sudden rain, and a rainbow appeared. This was thought to be very auspicious. After this I was given my personal name Karma Tendzin Trinle Künkhyap Pal Sangpo: All monks of the Karma Kagyü school are given the first name *Karma* after their founder; roughly translated the remaining words mean: "the universal action of the holder of the doctrine, the gloriously good." Later that day I was given all the seals and official documents of the tenth Trungpa Tulku. Everyone came to receive my blessing and offered me ceremonial scarves. The incarnate lamas and heads of monasteries led the way, followed by monks and laypeople; they presented me with robes and many other gifts.

After a few weeks Gyalwa Karmapa Rinpoche left for his own center close to Lhasa, and the senior tulkus from Palpung, after escorting him halfway, likewise returned to their monastery.



The umbrella of protection.

TWO

The Founding of Surmang

FOR MY LIFE as the eleventh Trungpa Tulku to be understood, it is necessary to know the history of the Kagyü school to which the Surmang monasteries belonged. The basic teaching was introduced into Tibet by Marpa the Translator, a great adept. He made three journeys to India under most difficult conditions to study with Naropa and other Indian Buddhist gurus and brought back many precious teachings which he translated from the Sanskrit. He was one of the leading scholars of what is known as the New Translation period. Milarepa, later to become one of Tibet's greatest saints, became his chief disciple to whom he handed over the spiritual authority to carry on his work. Milarepa's poems and the moving story of his life were written down soon after his death by several of his own disciples; there is a good translation into English by Evans-Wentz, and an outstanding one into French by Professor Bacot.

The monastic tradition of the Kagyü school was founded by Gampopa, a pupil of Milarepa born in 1079. His classical work *The Ornament of Precious Liberation* is still a leading manual in this school and has been translated into English by Dr. Herbert Guenther.

Following Gampopa's teaching, separate schools developed under three of his disciples and one of them, Karmapa, founded the Karma Kagyü school and established the abbey of Tsurphu near Lhasa which continued to be the principal monastery of the order. Karmapa's first incarnation Karma Pakshi (1203–1282), an eminent teacher, was invited to China by the emperor Kublai Khan, and the second incarnation

became the spiritual teacher of Kublai's successor. He was followed in this function by all the incarnations up to the tenth, who refused to go to China saying he would rather give his blessing to a dog's skull than to the emperor; he evidently disliked court life and did not wish to be connected with it even occasionally! The fifth Karmapa is especially known as the teacher of the Ming emperor Yung-lo and his influence on the spiritual and cultural thought of China was very great.

At the end of the fourteenth century Trung Mase Rinpoche, the son of the king of Minyak in East Tibet left his father's palace to seek spiritual guidance. He traveled from place to place and came to the monastery of Tsurphu: There he met the fifth Karmapa Teshin Shekpa, who became his guru and under whom he remained in retreat for ten years, in conditions of the utmost austerity. Karmapa then told him that the time had come for him to go out to found a monastery and to begin teaching himself.

He traveled around Tibet to find somewhere to establish it, and when he came to the valley of Yöshung he had the feeling that this was the place his teacher had predicted. He walked around the village with his begging bowl reciting the sutra (sacred treatise) *Arya-manjushri-nama-sangiti*, i.e., "the Perfect Song of the Name of Holy Manjushri," and felt that his search had come to an end when a woman came out of her doorway to put food in his bowl at the very moment that he had reached the words *chökyi gyaltsen lekpardzuk,* which mean "Plant well the banner of the victory of dharma." This seemed to be such an auspicious sign that he immediately decided to build his monastery on that spot. This was the beginning of Surmang; and when its monks recite this sutra, they will pause at these words and repeat them a second time.

At first Trung Mase built a small hut made with reeds: It was very primitive, with many corners. Disciples flocked to him, and some of them suggested that the monastery should now be given an imposing name, but he said that he was proud of his hut and since it was so irregular in shape it should be called Surmang, which means "many cornered."

More and more disciples joined the monastery, of whom eleven were especially notable: Three of these remained with their guru in the hut while the eight others, who were spiritually advanced teachers (*togden*), carried their doctrine round the country. Trungpa Künga Gyaltsen was one of these: He was looked upon as an incarnation of Maitreya Bodhi-

sattva, destined to be the buddha of the next world cycle, also of Dombipa, a great Buddhist siddha (adept), and of Milarepa.

As his guru had also done, Künga Gyaltsen looked for a place for his monastery, and at one of the villages on his travels he was told the story of Dombipa, who when he came there was holding a cup of *amrita* (symbolically the elixir of immortality) in his hand, which he threw into space, saying, "Wherever this cup falls will be the place for my reincarnation." It fell on a hill in the valley which has since been called Dütsi Tel (Hill of Amrita).

This story interested Künga Gyaltsen, and when thinking about it one night he had a dream in which his guru said, "You are an incarnation of Dombipa, and this is the place for your monastery." He was deeply moved, and the next day he felt that he must also throw a cup. He said, "If I am an incarnation of Dombipa, may my cup fall in the right place." He was five miles from the village but with the power of his word, the cup fell on the roof of Adro Shelu-bum, a large landowner's castle on the hill of Dütsi Tel. It made a ringing sound and at the same moment there was an earthquake. When he was told about Künga Gyaltsen's miraculous powers Adro Shelu-bum realized that he must be a disciple of Trung Mase, invited him to his palace, and was so deeply impressed by him that he became his devotee. He offered part of his home to his new guru to be used as a monstery, and undertook to feed the monks. As Trungpa Künga Gyaltsen intended to continue his own life of traveling and camping with his disciples, he did not want to establish a large monastery; he therefore thankfully accepted Adro Shelu-bum's offer and used it as a house of retreat for his monks. His camps became known as the Surmang *garchen tengpa* (the great camps of Surmang); many disciples joined them, and this mode of life was followed by his next three incarnations who were abbots of Dütsi Tel.

In the meantime, Trung Mase in his hut monastery had gathered a great many disciples around him. It became overcrowded, and Adro Shelu-bum gave him a second gift. This time it was the entire castle of Namgyal Tse which was much larger than Dütsi Tel and had a spacious assembly hall; much land was included in the endowment, together with rocky mountains where there were several caves suitable for meditation. Trung Mase transferred his hut monastery to Namgyal Tse, but retained the name of Surmang for the entire group.

As death approached he said that he would not reincarnate, as his

teaching was both his incarnation and his portrait. Garwang, one of the eight notable togdens of the hut monastery, followed him as abbot. Surmang now included Namgyal Tse, Dütsi Tel, and several small monasteries, each of which had its own abbot.

The fourth incarnation, Trungpa Künga Namgyal did not follow the camping way of life of his three predecessors, and a descendant of Adro Shelu-bum gave him the entire castle of Dütsi Tel for a separate monastery. Brought up by the disciples of his predecessor and also by the lamas of Namgyal Tse, he became a renowned teacher throughout East Tibet, and was widely known for his ability to continue for a long period in meditation without any bodily movement. Because of his reputation, Dütsi Tel, though a smaller monastery and with fewer monks than Namgyal Tse, was considered to be the more important.

However, Trungpa Künga Namgyal wished to devote his life to meditation, and for six years he remained as a hermit in a cave about a mile from Dütsi Tel; then, having reached a high degree of spiritual insight he returned to his monastery. After a year or two he felt that he must travel to give his teaching outside. Asking his brother to take charge of Dütsi Tel, he left without any attendant and only a white yak to carry his books and baggage. It was a hornless breed of yak used for riding and easy to control by a single man by means of a ring in its nose. Trungpa Künga Namgyal made a tour of the holy places, traditionally 108 in number; these included caves where renowned gurus had meditated, ruined cities where one could contemplate the impermanence of life, and past battlefields and graveyards.

Toward the end of his life he no longer needed to travel, for after he returned to his monastery disciples flocked to him, and he became the teacher of the whole Karma Kagyü school. He then wrote some sixteen treatises on various spiritual themes and founded further monasteries.

Following in such footsteps, the fifth Trungpa Tulku was generally recognized as an important abbot. He was honored by the Chinese emperor early in the seventeenth century and received the official rank of *hutukhtu,* the Mongolian equivalent for a great teacher, with its particular seals, hat, and robe; the charter conferring the title was written on yellow silk. He became the supreme abbot of all the Surmang monasteries and his authority also extended over the whole province.

At that time Dütsi Tel was extremely flourishing: The third Tulku Chetsang Rinpoche, himself a great artist, had superintended most of

the decoration and had painted many of the thangkas (pictorial scrolls mounted on silk). The walls of the assembly hall were frescoed from floor to ceiling in red and gold with scenes from the life of Gautama Buddha, and above them were depicted one thousand buddhas of the past, present, and future, of whom Gautama was the fourth, while Maitreya will be the fifth to guide us toward enlightenment.

Unfortunately the unusual beauty and wealth of Surmang was a cause of jealousy and the monasteries were attacked (in 1643) by the fanatical followers of Gusri Khan, a Mongol chief whose personal devotion to the then Dalai Lama and to the Geluk order of monks of which he is the head expressed itself in the incongruous form of destroying houses belonging to earlier monastic foundations; such exhibitions of sectarian bigotry have been rare in Buddhist history. This time the seventh Trungpa Tulku was captured, together with the artist the fifth Tulku Chetsang and the abbot of Namgyal Tse, who was a noted philosopher. Though cast into prison, each continued doing the things he considered to be of most importance: Trungpa meditated and recited on his rosary the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM one hundred million times; Tulku Chetsang painted thangkas; and the abbot revised his doctrinal treatises.

During their incarceration there was a prolonged drought in Tibet; many prayers were offered up but no rain fell. Finally, Trungpa Tulku was approached in prison. He handed the messenger the rosary he had used for the hundred million recitations and told him to dip it in a certain spring. When this was done a cloud rose from the spring and came down in rain over all the country. After this the three prisoners were released; Tulku Chetsang needed three mules to transport the thangkas he had completed.

The eighth Trungpa Tulku formed a very close friendship with Gyalwa Karmapa, the supreme abbot of the order, with its two centers of Tsurphu in Central Tibet and Karma Monastery in East Tibet. The latter was noted for its superb architecture and the artistry of its interior, as I saw for myself when I visited it in 1953. The center of the Gardri school of artists was at Karma Geru near the monastery, and the eighth Trungpa Tulku was one of its leading exponents; he himself painted many thangkas for Surmang and specialized in illuminated manuscripts. He was also the founder of its great libraries.

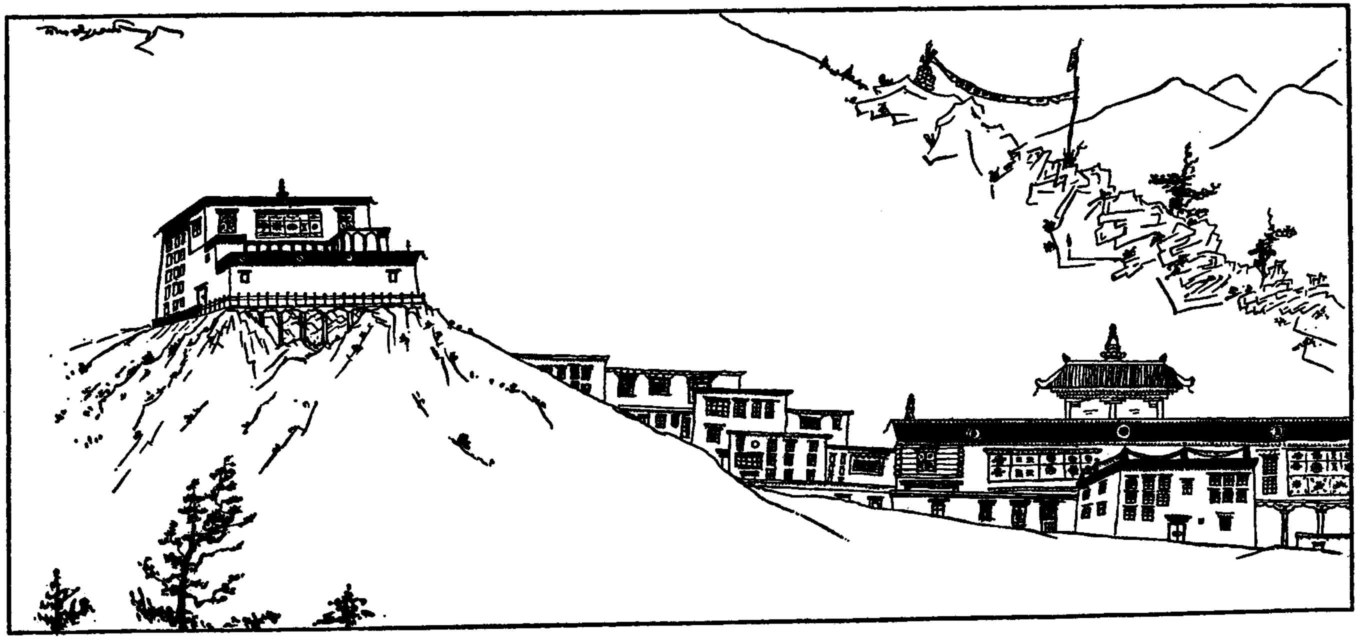
THREE

Dütsi Tel and Namgyal Tse

PERHAPS A BRIEF DESCRIPTION of the whole monastic domain over which I had to preside will help to illustrate the background of my life.

When Adro Shelu-bum gave his two castles to Surmang, his gifts included many acres of land, so that the property extended some fifty miles in each direction. It lay at a high altitude on the border between the cultivated land and that inhabited by highlanders. The chief commercial products of the district were salt and timber from the excellent firs which grew near the Tzi-chu and the Ke-chu rivers to the south of Surmang. Barley and a little wheat were the only grain crops, vegetables being limited to spinach, turnips, and a small kind of leek; besides, there was good pasturage for domestic animals such as yaks and sheep, for the slopes of the mountains were covered with short grass. Willows grew by the streams on the lower ground and in drier places another type of short willow was to be found. Higher up, tamarisk shrubs were plentiful, and above these scented junipers grew. In the short summer months the whole place was ablaze with wild flowers.

Adro Shelu-bum's castle on the Hill of Amrita had been protected by a separate fort; both buildings were incorporated into the monastery of Dütsi Tel. The fort was a large building and was used for many purposes. Both the assembly hall and the main library were situated there: Some of its rooms served for storing food, others, as a treasure-house for the monastery's valuables. The supreme abbot's residence was also above the assembly hall. In my time Dütsi Tel had some 300 monks; of these 170



Dütsi Tel Monastery.

were bhikshus (fully ordained monks), the remainder being shramaneras (novices) and young upasaka students who had already taken the vow of celibacy. Their quarters in two- and three-storied buildings stretched down the slope of the mountain to the river. Another large assembly hall was built on the lower ground; it was divided in two, the small part being for younger monks between the ages of eight and fourteen, while the main part was for the communal use of the whole monastery. A throne for the *gekö*, a senior monk in charge of discipline, stood in a prominent position at the entrance from where he could keep an eye on everyone. The monks used to sit cross-legged on low benches covered with rugs and cushions, with their tables in front of them; their rows faced the central aisle leading to the abbot's throne on its high dais, while his two chief attendants sat close by on each side of the steps. At this end of the hall there were three more thrones; one on the right was for his deputy should the abbot himself be prevented from officiating. Of the other two, the one was for a senior monk in charge of the timetable for the assemblies and the other for the precentor monk who conducted the music and led the chanting. Behind the thrones dominating the hall were three large images depicting the past, present, and future buddhas; these were some twelve feet high, gold plated with an aquamarine glittering on their foreheads to indicate the "third eye" of universal knowledge; each was seated on a throne decorated with precious and semiprecious stones. A second assembly hall built higher up the slope was used for philosophical and other advanced studies and particularly for the "summer retreats" (varshka).

Dütsi Tel again suffered much damage when it was attacked in a political border dispute during the lifetime of the tenth Trungpa Tulku; the old wall frescoes were in fact all destroyed. They were eventually replaced with the help of eminent artists of the Gardri school from Karma Geru, who were employed to cover the walls as before with pictures of scenes from the life of Gautama Buddha and also with various buddha-mandalas, that is to say groupings of celestial figures representing different aspects of enlightenment. Banners hung from the balconies and hundreds of butter lamps gave light to these lovely halls. The pillars and spreading capitals were lacquered a vermillion red on which designs had been painted in different colors. Several thousands of the ancient thangkas had fortunately been saved when the monastery was attacked; many of these were the work of Chetsang Rinpoche while in prison with

the fifth Trungpa Tulku, others had been painted by the eighth Trungpa, whose illuminated manuscripts were kept in the fort library.

One old house, built by the fifth Trungpa Tulku on the mountain slope was kept for the very severe retreat which every monk had to observe for the period of one year twice in his lifetime. It was called the *gönkhang* (house of the guardian divinities).

The kitchen and food stores were in the east wing of the main assembly hall, and cooking was done on a huge stove made of stone and clay into which the fuel, consisting of dried yak dung and wood, could be shovelled through holes at its sides. The stove was so large that a cooking pot some nine feet in diameter, made of an alloy of copper and iron, fitted over the first opening, and there were other lesser openings. The large pot was used for making both tea and soup; the former was made by boiling some brick tea in water, after which the liquid was poured into pipe-shaped barrels and churned up with salt and butter using a long-handled pestle. When ready to serve the tea was poured into a number of wooden pails with metal decorations and carried round to the monks who could ladle it into their own bowls and if they liked, mix it with roasted barley (*tsampa*). A big tank of water drawn from the nearby river was always kept in the kitchen.

The extensive storerooms above the kitchen were divided into sections for such treasures as thangkas, shrine objects, banners, costumes for religious dances, etc., indeed all the things required for performing various traditional rites: The gekö was responsible for this department and both his and his subordinates' rooms were in the same wing. The sanitation of the monastery was by large cesspits, the contents of which were periodically cleaned out and used to manure the fields; scrupulous cleanliness was observed everywhere. Such was Dütsi Tel when I, the eleventh Trungpa Tulku, was enthroned supreme abbot of Surmang.

Namgyal Tse lay some forty-five miles or three days' journey from Dütsi Tel and was the larger monastery of the two. Adro Shelu-bum's castle and its fort stood by themselves on a small hill about a mile and a half from the village; the river, fed from the surrounding mountains, flowed past its base. Trung Mase built a small house for his own use at the bottom of the hill. The monastery soon became overcrowded, and after Trung Mase's death, a building was begun on the mountain to the northeast, where there was already a cave which was used as a meditation



drawn by Sherab Palden Beru

Clockwise from top: *Amitayur, Buddha of Limitless Life; Vijaya (the Victorious One); and Tara (the Savior).*
DRAWN BY SHERAB PALDEN BERU.

shrine. The new building was subsequently kept for spiritual retreats. Garwang Rinpoche, the following abbot, and his successors did not use the small house, but chose part of the fort for their residence, and rooms were later reserved there for the supreme abbot.

So many monks joined Namgyal Tse that three different sections were formed for specific work and teaching. In the lifetime of the fifth Trungpa Tulku a very large assembly hall was built on the lower ground below the hill. This belonged to the whole monastic community; it had very original embroidered hangings festooning its walls, with pictures inset in the spaces. The hall was rather like that of Karma Monastery, having a high chamber at its further end for the images of the past, present, and future buddhas. These were made of clay and painted gold, while about forty images of saints of the Kagyü line were placed at the back of the hall.

A second assembly hall was built on a higher slope of the mountain for the monks of the Dechen Tse *tratsang* (college); it held some 450 monks and was intended particularly for those who were interested in the intellectual approach—to start with, it had its own abbot. Another monastic building was erected on the lower part of the slope; it became the Lingpa tratsang, and its 350 monks specialized on the administrative side of Surmang. The Lama tratsang, with 300 inmates, stood in a field on the level ground; among other things, it dealt with Namgyal Tse administration, but a wider responsibility fell on some of its senior members, for they had to deal with matters in the district outside Surmang proper. Each tratsang had its own hall, library, kitchen, and offices. The monks' dwelling houses were disposed in tiers on the slopes of the mountain, from Dechen Tse tratsang at the top down to the large assembly hall. Above it stood the press building in which we printed our scriptures. The gönkhang stood near by; Tulku Tendzin Rinpoche, who was an incarnation of one of the eight togdens of Trung Mase's time, had sculptured some wonderful images for it early in the present century; these were made of clay and consecrated herbs, and depicted symbolically the guardians of the teaching. The whole building had a tremendous atmosphere of spiritual presence.

Later, in the lifetime of the tenth Trungpa Tulku, the abbots of Surmang built the first seminary on the lower part of the slope.

When I was its supreme abbot, Namgyal Tse held 600 bhikshus, 300 shramaneras, and 100 novices; five incarnate lamas were included in this company.

FOUR

My Childhood at Dütsi Tel

When I was three years old, the heads of my mother's village invited her to take me to visit them. I can remember the journey very clearly. This was the first time that I had ridden a horse; it was a white one and had belonged to the tenth Trungpa Rinpoche, and when I was told that it had been his, I refused to change it for any other mount: I was put in a little chair saddle. We passed high mountains on the way, and one day we met a herd of about five hundred wild asses (kyang) which trotted around us, and this fascinated me. My parents had always loved their own part of the country and its wild animals, so it was a great joy to my mother to get back to her home, and I too thoroughly enjoyed the change.

During the months that we stayed in our family home, all our relations were exceedingly kind; they brought me cream and all sorts of gifts. However, I was never allowed to play with the children, but only to watch them at their games. They found curiously shaped stones in a particular gully, and these made wonderful toys; I longed to take some back to the monastery, but this too was forbidden.

At the end of our visit, my mother took me back to Dütsi Tel, though my father remained behind; no one told me why and I was very puzzled; then one day, a monk told me that he was not my father but my stepfather, and this comforted me a lot.

All these years I had a very happy time; my mother was with me and I was not expected to do any lessons; sometimes, I was even allowed to play with other children, the sons of the relatives of respected monks.

One day I saw a man, probably a Muslim, being thrashed; he had killed a wild animal on the monastery's protected ground. His hands had been tied behind his back, and the monk was accusing him of all sorts of crimes while he belabored him with a heavy stick. I felt great pity and asked another monk about it; he replied that this was the way to uphold the law. I said, "Shall I have to do this when I am grown up and have charge of the monastery?" His answer to this was, "You will be able to do as you like." "Well," I said, "I will never use punishment like that."

The tenth Trungpa Tulku's rooms in the fort at Dütsi Tel had been extremely simple and austere; their only decoration were the thangkas hung on the silk-covered walls. However, after his death my secretary and bursar wanted to change things. They employed some sixteen artists and wood-carvers of the Gardri school to redesign my residence. While this was being done, I had great fun watching the work, especially the artists painting, and the son of one of them and I used to steal their paints and make pictures ourselves, to our own great delight: I have loved painting ever since.

When the work was finished, there were cupboards all around the walls; their doors were beautifully painted with ornamental designs of flowers, birds, etc., and the general coloring was gold on a red background. The tops of the cupboards formed a shelf for the many gifts of bowls and offerings which were brought to me. Behind it there were recesses framed in deeply carved and lacquered wood to hold old and valuable images of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and eminent spiritual masters. Above these was a second row of niches to house images of smaller size. The walls joined the ceiling with a deep gold painted, carved cornice. The wooden ceiling was colored. The furniture consisted of several long settees with deep piled up mattresses which, in our country, take the place of chairs. My bed was like a long box filled with cushions, so made that in the daytime I could sit on it and work at a long table beside it. One side of the room, over the cupboards, was exclusively used for my books; these scriptures were written or printed on separate oblong pages held together between two boards and tied up with a ribbon; at one end the title of the book was written on a white brocade flap, and the books were arranged so that the title faced outward.

My bedroom served both for sleeping and for private study and meditation; it opened into a sitting room where meals were served and

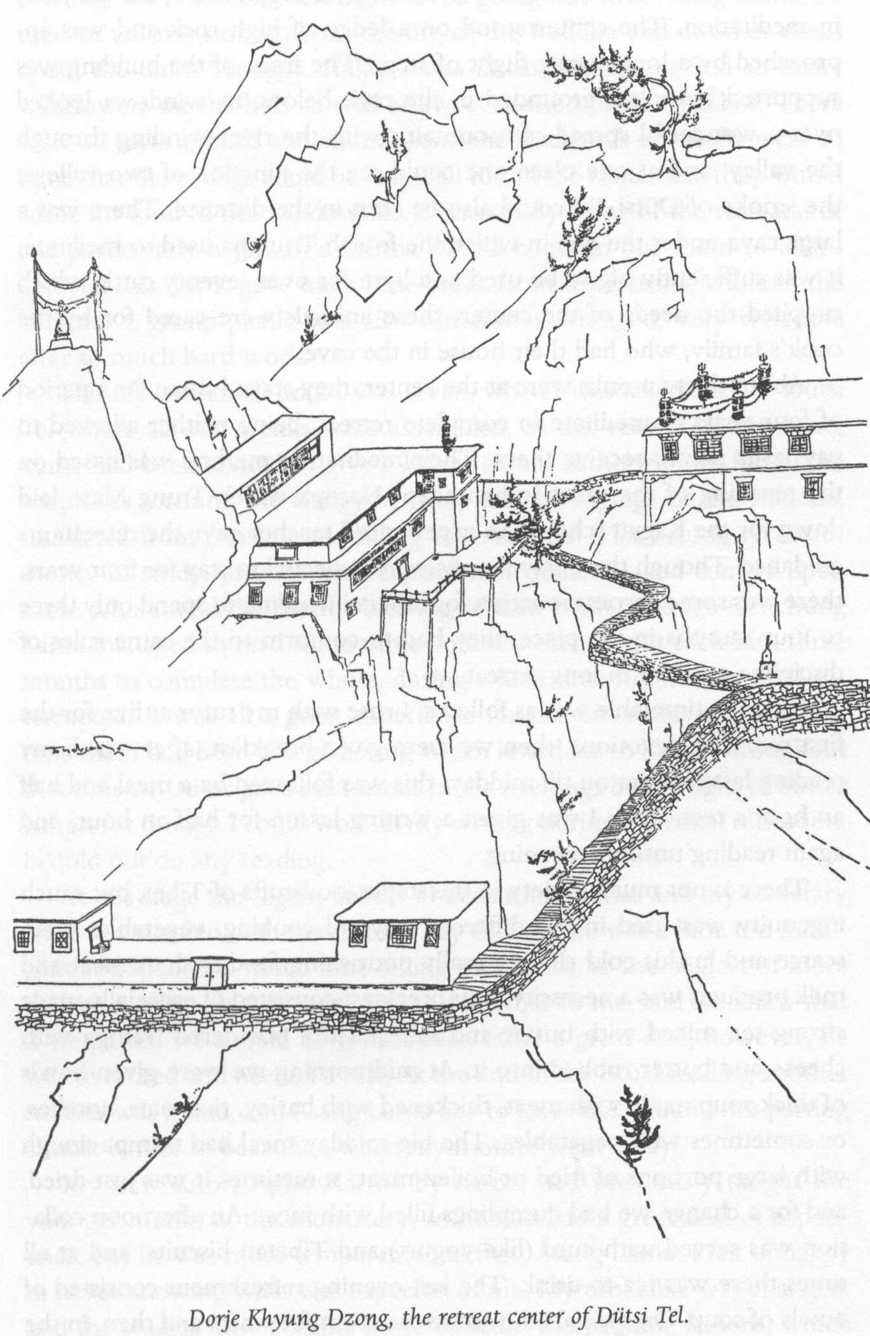
formal visits received. My raised throne was beside the door and a row of seats ran lengthwise down each side of the room; those nearest the throne had thick cushions for the more important guests but their size gradually diminished until the end of the rows, when they became merely rugs on the floor.

Since I was now five years old, it was decided that it was time for me to begin my studies. It was a great shock to hear that a special teacher was coming to Dütsi Tel to give me lessons. One of the monks told me that he had a scar on his forehead, and I anxiously watched everyone who came for fear that it might be he. One day Asang Lama arrived; though I saw that he had a scar, I said to myself, "This can't be my new teacher," for I had expected him to be a very severe monk, but this man looked so gentle. He held his rosary in his hand and was smiling and talking to my senior secretary.

We began our lessons on the following day in my residence above the assembly hall. It happened to be the first day of winter and snow was falling. Always before, when the monks came to sweep the snow off the flat roof, we children would play among them, throwing snowballs at each other; on that day I could hear my little friends shouting at their play outside, while I had to remain indoors to do lessons. Asang Lama was very kind; he gave me a clay panel made in relief depicting Amitabha, the Buddha of Infinite Light, which delighted me, and he told me how glad he was to be able to be my teacher, for he had been a devotee of the tenth Trungpa Tulku. He began with teaching me the Tibetan alphabet and was surprised that I picked it up in one lesson. I also had to learn to recite a *mantra* or formula of Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom. We went on with both reading and writing lessons; this was unusual, for in Tibet reading is usually taught first and writing comes afterward.

At this time my mother's visits became less frequent; to begin with she only came to see me every other day, then every third, after which her visits became more and more spaced out, until after a fortnight without seeing her, she came to tell me that she was going back to Dekyil; I missed her as only a small boy can.

The life at Dütsi Tel was found to be too full of distractions, so it was arranged to send me to Dorje Khyung Dzong, the retreat center established by the tenth Trungpa Tulku. It was in a remote spot and had



Dorje Khyung Dzong, the retreat center of Dütsi Tel.

been built over the cave where the fourth Trungpa had spent six years in meditation. The center stood on a ledge of high rock and was approached by a long zigzag flight of steps. The front of the building was supported by pillars grounded in the rock below; its windows looked over a wonderful spread of mountains with the river winding through the valley, and at one place one could see the junction of two valleys; the smoke of Dütsi Tel could also be seen in the distance. There was a large cave under the one in which the fourth Trungpa used to meditate; it was sufficiently big to be used as a byre for over seventy cattle which supplied the needs of the center; these animals were cared for by the cook's family, who had their house in the cave.

About thirty monks were at the center; they stayed there for a period of four years to meditate in complete retreat, being neither allowed to pay visits nor to receive them. Their meditation method was based on the teaching of the great Indian adept Naropa which Trung Mase laid down for the Kagyü school. An experienced teacher gave the retreatants guidance. Though the thirty monks were expected to stay for four years, there was some accommodation for others intending to spend only three to four months in the place; they had to conform to the same rules of discipline as those in long retreat.

My own timetable was as follows: I rose with my tutor at five for the first morning devotions, then we were given breakfast, after which my reading lesson went on till midday; this was followed by a meal and half an hour's rest. Then I was given a writing lesson for half an hour, and again reading until the evening.

There is not much variety in the staple foodstuffs of Tibet, but much ingenuity was used in the different ways of cooking; vegetables were scarce and in this cold climate really nourishing food such as meat and milk products was a necessity. Our breakfast consisted of especially made strong tea mixed with butter and salt and dry powdered tsampa with cheese and butter rubbed into it. At midmorning we were given bowls of thick soup made with meat, thickened with barley, rice, oats, noodles, or sometimes with vegetables. The big midday meal had tsampa dough with large portions of fried or boiled meat; sometimes it was just dried, and for a change we had dumplings filled with meat. An afternoon collation was served with curd (like yogurt) and Tibetan biscuits, and at all times there was tea to drink. The last evening refreshment consisted of bowls of soup. On special afternoons we went for walks and then, in the

evening, we practiced chanting. I loved going out with Asang Lama; he used to tell me stories about the life of the Buddha and at other times about the tenth Trungpa Tulku. I was fascinated also to find so many wildflowers on the hills as well as sweet-scented juniper bushes. There were all sorts of birds and animals, and the blackbirds especially were so tame that their songs could be heard all round the center and they would come for food to the windowsills. Occasionally some of the retreatants, and particularly my tutor's friends, would come to our room to talk; I enjoyed this, for it gave me a little break from my lessons, while in the summer a group picnic was also sometimes arranged, very welcome after so much hard work.

This life continued until I was seven, when I was taken back to Dütsi Tel where all our monks were assembled, as the venerable Genchung Lama had been invited to give a *kalung* (ritual authorization) for all the scriptures forming the Kangyur; these are the sayings of the Buddha, translated from Sanskrit and filling 108 volumes. This kalung gives authority to study, practice, and explain their meaning and confers upon those who attend the rite the blessing of their truth. Though Genchung Lama managed to read some three volumes each day, it took him three months to complete the whole, during which time my lessons were interrupted. It was all a great experience for me, since this was the first time that I had been at a gathering which lasted for so long. Throughout that time my tutor gave me lessons in the evenings by the light of butter lamps, for though I could work at my writing during the ritual recitation, I could not do any reading.

At this stage the regent abbots of both monasteries and my secretary were not satisfied with my tutor. They thought he was a little too indulgent and spent too much time telling me stories, to the neglect of more serious studies. He was indeed almost a father to me, and we knew that if we parted we should both miss each other a great deal; however, he was overtired and needed a rest. At the end of the ritual reading another teacher was found, and Asang Lama had to leave me. I found this parting almost harder to bear than when my mother went away.

My new tutor, Apho Karma by name, had previously taught the younger monks at the monastery, so he had had a great deal of experience, but he was more temperamental than Asang Lama. I felt unhappy in never knowing what was expected of me. My timetable was changed, and the studies now became more difficult; the painting lessons, which

Asang Lama had encouraged, were stopped, and writing lessons were made shorter; more time was given to reading and much more memorizing had to be done in the evenings by lamplight, with the lesson having to be repeated correctly the following morning.

We returned to Dorje Khyung Dzong, but the retreatants who came to talk to Apho Karma were very different from Asang Lama's friends, and we no longer had our little jokes. There were, however, longer periods for walks and frequent picnics, but my tutor was always very serious and solemn, though he too occasionally told me stories. He was not interested in animals and flowers, and I had neither playmates nor playthings. I discovered, however, that the fireworks for the New Year celebrations were filled with gunpowder, my informant being one of the younger monks who used to clean our rooms. I persuaded him to get some of the gunpowder for me, and I concocted some sort of rockets with rolled paper and managed not to be discovered. These were so successful that I wanted to make a better firework that would go off with a bang. I was in my room working at this, when Apho Karma came in and smelled the gunpowder. He did not punish me at the time, but he never ceased to remind me of how naughty I had been.

I never received corporal punishment after Asang Lama left when I was seven years old. When he had thought that it was necessary to admonish me, it was always done with great ceremony. After a foreword such as "It is like molding an image; it has to be hammered into shape," he would prostrate himself three times before me, and then administer the chastisement on the appropriate part.

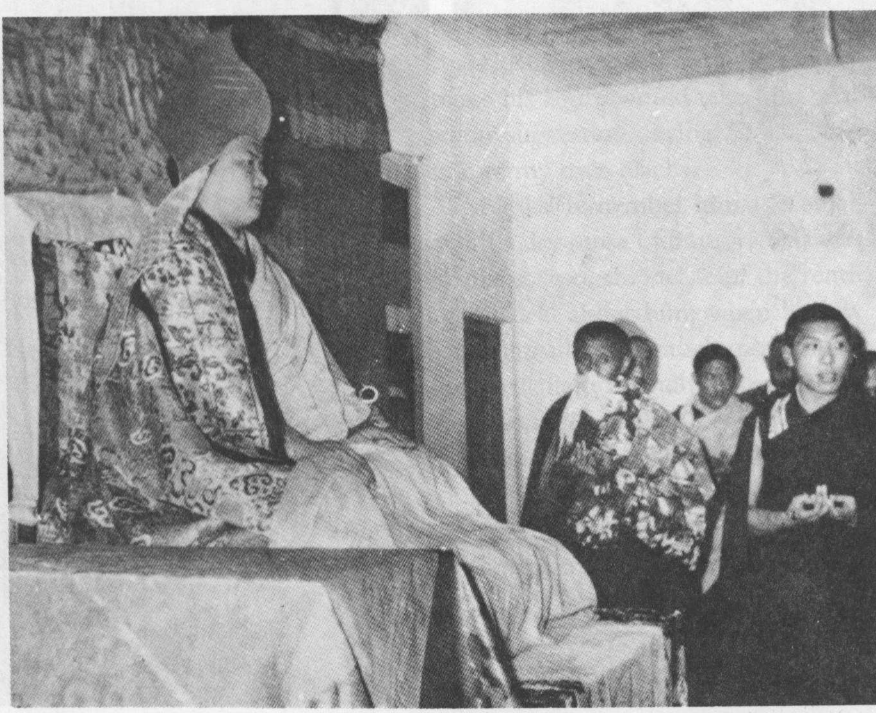
About this time I had some strange dreams: though even in pictures I had never seen the things that are made in the West, I dreamed I was riding in a mechanized truck somewhat like a small lorry, and a few days later in another dream I saw airplanes parked in a field. Also about that time, in my sleep, I was walking through a shop which was full of boots, shoes, saddles, and straps with buckles, but these were not like Tibetan ones and instead of being made of leather they appeared to be of sticky dried blood. Later I realized that they were all the shapes and kinds that are used in Western lands. I told Apho Karma about these dreams and he merely said, "Oh, it's just nonsense."

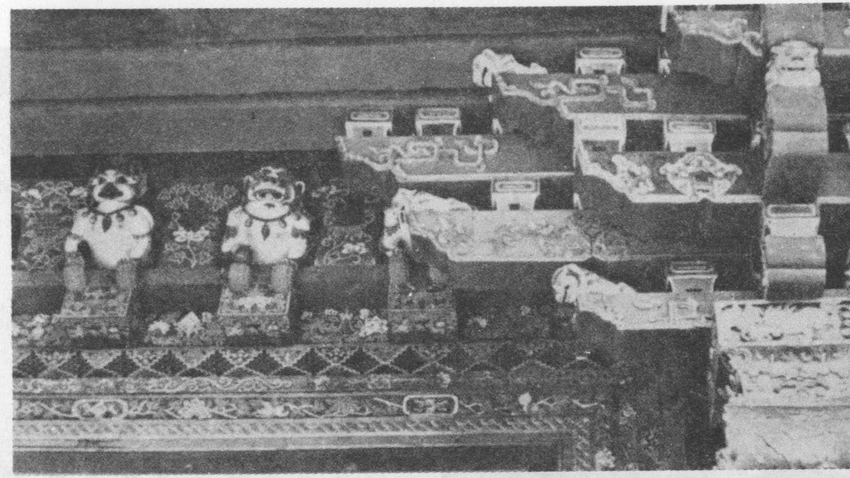
When I was eight I had to learn how to perform various rites; how to intone; and how to use drums, bells, and various other instruments. I



His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Rikpe Dorje, the sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa. Chögyam Trungpa at right.

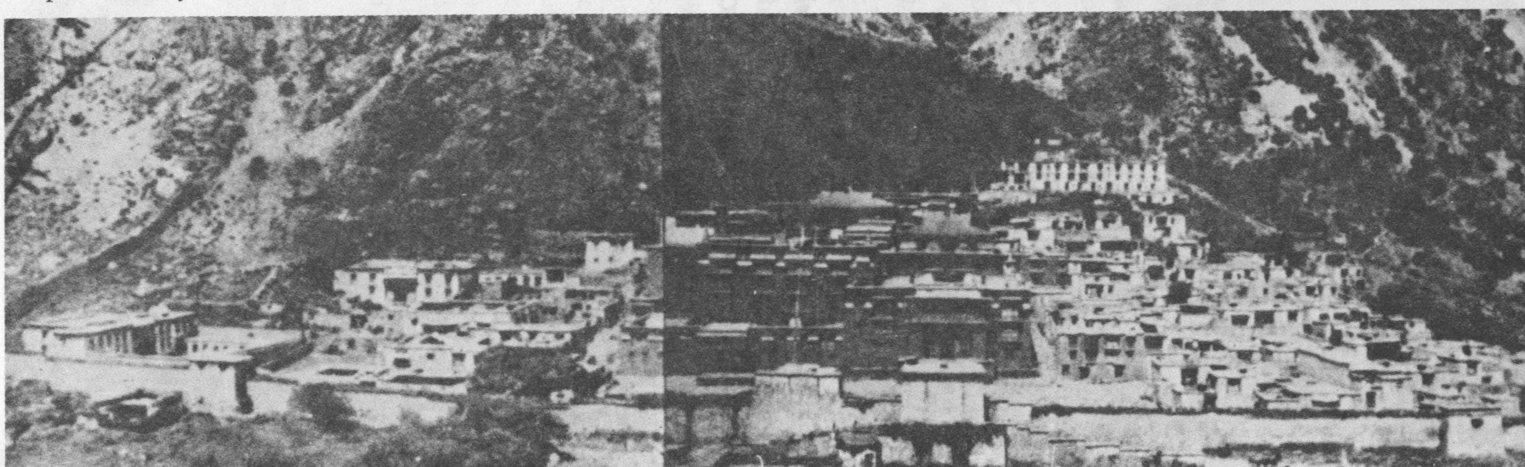




Lacquered pillar with spreading capital.

PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.

Tsurphu Monastery.



had to improve my reading, and I was taught the practice and history of Buddhism and about the life of the Buddha. I could visualize him among his monks in their saffron robes, for one day I had had a vivid moment of recollection. When I read about the death of his mother, seven days after his birth, I seemed to share his feeling of loss. I read the life of Milarepa many times over till I knew it by heart, and also the lives of other great saints. Guru Padmasambhava's story was my favorite, for I loved to read about the way he brought Buddhism to Tibet, established the first monasteries and taught the doctrine, and above all about his great loving-kindness to all our people and the moving message he left with us when he was returning to Lankapuri, an island southwest of Mount Meru. After giving the Tibetans his blessing, he added: "The people may forget me, but I shall not forget them; my eternal compassion is always with them."

My tutor and the senior lamas found me very enthusiastic and interested in my studies, always asking a lot of questions. They thought that it would be a good time for me to learn the rules for a novice (shramanera), and I began my first instruction in metaphysical doctrines, though at the time it was not known that I was to be ordained.

According to Buddhist scriptures, a boy of eight can be ordained as a novice, and when the news came that the renowned teacher Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung was going to Tsurphu Monastery to give his disciple the Gyalwa Karmapa some further spiritual instruction, while at the same time visiting his mother at Lhasa, Rölpa Dorje and my secretary decided to ask him to ordain me, since his route would take him near Surmang. Jamgön Kongtrül accepted the suggestion, saying, "Thus I can serve and offer help to the incarnation of my own teacher."

He was warmly welcomed at Dütsi Tel. I remember him as a small man, neat and precise in all he did, with a dry sense of humor. This was the first time that he had visited Surmang since the death of the tenth Trungpa Tulku, and he told me a great deal about him; when he saw things that had belonged to his beloved guru he was much moved, and because I was his incarnation, he was particularly friendly to me.

My ordination took place at the full moon. Four bhikshus had to take part in the rite; one was Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche and the three others were senior lamas. I had to make profession of the monastic rules for a shramanera of the Sarvastivadin order, to which most northern Buddhists—that is to say, Tibetans, Chinese, and Japanese—belong; whereas

southern Buddhists of Ceylon, Burma, and Thailand belong to the Theravada order. After the ceremony, Jamgön Kongtrül preached me a sermon; he said, "From today you enter the community of the sangha," after which he explained to me the meaning of the life of my predecessor and how he had always kept the rule. He said that my ordination was a very important step in my life, and added that I was the youngest novice that he had ever ordained. After giving me some further teaching and advice, he continued his journey.

I was now much less afraid of Apho Karma, who had become more understanding, and I looked forward to our walks together.

At eight years old a child is very sensitive, and it is the time to inculcate ideas which must last him his lifetime, so at the end of this year I went into retreat for a simple form of meditation. This was upon the nyendrup of Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom: that is to say, I was instructed to visualize him with his various symbolic attributes and to contemplate his transcendental wisdom, to repeat his mantras or sonorous embodiments, and to recite the verses which preceded and followed them. I took a vow that I would live in solitude for three months away from all contacts other than my tutor and my cook attendant; no one might come to see me. My diet was strictly vegetarian, and I was not allowed to go outside the retreat center. This continued until the New Year.

As my story unfolds it will be seen how the whole line of the teaching was carried to me directly from guru to disciple. The great Jamgön Kongtrül taught the tenth Trungpa Tulku, who in turn became the guru of his own incarnations Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung and Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen. The latter, as my spiritual father, was my instructor in meditation, and Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung was my ordainer and also gave me a great deal of teaching. Though the great Jamgön Kongtrül did in fact have five incarnations, the other three do not come into my story.

I was nine when Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen was invited to Dütsi Tel to give a *wangkur* (empowerment rite) on the teaching of the *Treasury of Spiritual Instructions* (*Dam Ngag Dzö*). This was contained in thirteen volumes, and was a selection of the sacred writings of renowned gurus of all the various Tibetan schools which had been collected by his predecessor.

So many monks from outside monasteries kept coming that Jamgön Kongtrül found Dütsi Tel too crowded and disturbing, and it was decided

to move to Dorje Khyung Dzong. The rites began on the day of the full moon; first with offerings at the shrine, followed by chanting and ending with a communal meal. However, since Jamgön Kongtrül was so renowned as a meditation teacher, hundreds of people came to hear him as well as to receive his blessing, and in some cases to put their private troubles before him. They established themselves in the open and in nearby caves, and soon the conditions became as involved and difficult as they had been at Dütsi Tel. Jamgön Kongtrül could get no rest and in consequence fell ill. He was forced to move to a small house a short distance from the retreat center, and Rölpa Dorje took over the work while he was resting. Later, when his health improved, he only undertook to give individual meditation teaching; I remained one of his pupils.

When I first saw him, I was enormously impressed; he was so different from any other teacher that I had met. He was a big jolly man, friendly to all without distinction of rank, very generous and with a great source of humor combined with deep understanding; he was always sympathetic to the troubles of others. Though he was not well at the time, to be near him was to experience unbelievable peace and joyousness. He used to say that now that we had met again he was my teacher as, the time before, my predecessor had been his. He so clearly remembered all that the tenth Trungpa Tulku had taught him, and all his kindness to him from his earliest childhood. He said how happy he was to give back to me that which he had received from his own guru, or as they say in Tibet "to return the owner's possessions."

I found later that every word he spoke had significance. I went to him every morning, and one day he told me that he saw me as a grown-up man looking like my last incarnation.

He would say, "Nowadays people are changing and all the world is in darkness and surrounded by suffering. My generation has been fortunate in living in a country which has been so happy; I hope suffering will not come to you. You must indeed come to Sechen to receive the full cup of spiritual milk (*pumpa gangjö oma*); young people like you are our hope for the future; you are like a flower in bud which must be properly looked after so that it may bloom both in our monasteries and in the homes of our people. You are very sensitive, and all of us must help you; I in particular have the privilege of cultivating you with the spiritual water of teaching and practice."

One morning he sent for me; as I entered the room the first rays of

the sun fell upon me, and he remarked that this was a very significant sign. After this, the teaching he gave me was so profound that I felt he was giving me back the spirituality he himself had received from the tenth Trungpa Rinpoche. He was overjoyed when he realized that I could absorb his teaching without any barrier between us. He told me that from now on I must continue to meditate, but must keep things to myself and not speak about them to other people. A little later he explained that since I was still a child and would not be able to sustain concentration for a long period, I must appoint a special time for meditation and keep to it regularly. He emphasized that I must come to receive various teachings from him and particularly instruction in devotion, compassion, and the way of behavior in everyday life. He also said that without knowing the other side of the mountain one could not risk taking to a mountain pass. I should have knowledge of both absolute and relative truths, and should realize why it is necessary for one to know more about suffering and impermanence before renouncing the world; he added that there was great meaning when the Lord Buddha turned the wheel of the doctrine, showing the three stages of the path.

Soon after this Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche said he wished to leave; he explained that though he was sorry that he could not continue the wangkur, his purpose for being at Surmang had been fulfilled. All, and I in particular, were very sad that he could not remain with us; his visit had meant so much. He was always so full of the joy of living and was a delightful storyteller, telling tales of different gurus and lamas, but his jokes always could be interpreted as having a second and deeper meaning, so that even while he entertained he taught. I well remember one of the stories he told us.

"Once," he said, "there was a great teacher called Paltrül Rinpoche. He did not belong to any monastery, but traveled everywhere about the country, without any attendants or baggage. One day he went to visit a certain hermit who had been living alone in a hut for many years: In fact he had become quite famous and many people came to see him there. Some came for advice and some to test how advanced he was in spiritual knowledge. Paltrü Rinpoche entered the hut unknown and unannounced.

"'Where have you come from,' said the hermit, 'and where are you going?'

" 'I came from behind my back and am going in the direction I am facing.'

'The hermit was taken aback, but he asked, 'Where were you born?'

" 'On earth' was the reply.

" 'Which school do you follow?'

" 'The Buddha.'

'The hermit was now feeling rather put out, and seeing that his visitor was wearing a white lambskin hat, he asked him, 'If you are a monk, why are you wearing that hat?'

" 'Now I see your sort,' said Paltrül Rinpoche. 'Look here. If I wear a red hat, the Gelukpas will be looking down their noses, and if I wear a yellow one, the others will be at me. So I have a white one; it saves trouble.' He was referring jocularly to the fact that the Geluk order of monks wear a yellow hat and all the remaining orders a red one. This was a little joke about intermonastic rivalries!

"The hermit did not understand what he was saying, so Paltrül Rinpoche began asking him why on earth he had come to live in such a remote and wild part of the country. He knew the answer to that one, and explained that he had been there for twenty years meditating. 'At the moment,' he said, 'I am meditating on the perfection of patience.'

" 'That's a good one," said his visitor, and leaned forward as if confiding something to him. 'A couple of frauds like us could never manage anything like that.'

"The hermit rose from his seat—'You're the liar,' he said. 'What made you come here? Why couldn't you leave a poor hermit like me to practice meditation in peace?'

" 'And now,' said Paltrül Rinpoche, 'where is your perfection of patience?' "

When Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche left us we all felt that something very lovely was missing; he had given the whole place such a wonderful atmosphere. We continued to receive the teaching of the *Treasury of Spiritual Instructions* under Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche, and when it was finished I went back to my lessons with Apho Karma.

In Tibet, the greatest respect has always been felt for spiritually endowed lamas, who act as priests or teachers without being monks. Such people would have promised to keep to the upasaka discipline and practice the fundamental rules of virtue as well as to observe the bodhisattva's vow of compassion with the aim of leading all sentient beings to

enlightenment; finally, they would undertake to obey the sacred word of the vajrayana by dedicating themselves to the supreme knowledge.

Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche was one of these married lamas, a man advanced in spiritual knowledge. He had been an important disciple of the tenth Trungpa Tulku and was a reincarnation of a famous author and teacher called Khyentse Rinpoche, who was born in 1817. Because of his profound learning, the monks of Dütsi Tel invited him to give the wangkur (initiation) of *Tzokchen Düpa* on anuyana which contains advanced vajrayana teaching. The empowerment rite lasted for a month and when it was over, Dilgo Khyentse undertook to give me special instruction. I felt drawn to him as if he had been my father; and thus I often addressed him without any shyness or doubt. He welcomed me as the incarnation of his own guru, and since I was still only a child of ten he brought me toys and sweets. He was very tall and dignified and never seemed in a hurry. Whatever he did was perfection of its kind, even the way he walked into the hall showed this quality; all he said was expressed to perfection, in fact, he surpassed anyone I had ever met; his writings were equally remarkable, and added to this he was a poet and had a gift for telling delightful stories.

All the previous year I had had a great deal to do, meeting lamas from other monasteries and taking part in many rites, so my lessons had been rather neglected, though my general knowledge and understanding had increased. Dilgo Khyentse gave me private teaching on atiyana (*ati* means "the ultimate") and handed on to me much that he himself had received from the tenth Trungpa Tulku and from gurus of other schools. He left after several months, which was so great a sorrow and shock to me that for a few days I could neither study nor eat. I felt this parting more severely than when my early tutor Asang Lama had had to leave me, and to fill the blank I set to work harder than before.

Soon after this, Apho Karma took me back to the retreat center of Dorje Khyung Dzong, as he had decided that it was now time to change my subjects of study. He wished me to give short sermons to the monks and laymen there; among them was the king of Lhathok's son whose father had been instrumental in procuring the tenth Trungpa Tulku's release from his imprisonment during some local troubles.

By the year 1949 conditions in East Tibet were becoming increasingly confused. In China there had been fighting between the Nationalists and Communists resulting in the victory of the latter. However, news travels

slowly in Tibet and the Tibetans in Nyishu-tsa-nga province, who supported the Nationalists, were still on their way to help their allies, taking with them about a thousand horses and much food, wool, cloth, and skins. When they reached Siling they found the Communists in possession and were forced to hand everything over to them. The Communists took this opportunity to make large-scale propaganda; they filmed the Tibetans in the act of handing over these things as if this was a voluntary gift; a large banquet was arranged which was also filmed in such a way as to show the friendly feeling existing between Communists and Tibetans.

Three months later we heard that three Communist officials had arrived in Jyekundo the principal trading center of our province. They had been put in charge of the town as well as the whole district of Nyishu-tsa-nga, which includes Surmang. Since they were unarmed and did not interfere much at the start, both parties remained seemingly on friendly terms, though the Tibetans were still distrustful. Two months later the senior Communist official started to offer suggestions. He would say, "The offerings at your shrines are a waste of food; you should eat more plentifully and spend what you have, rather than hoard. In future you will not have such freedom. You must realize this."

It was later discovered that this man was actually in the Nationalist secret service, as was his brother in China, but when he heard that the latter had been caught, he himself escaped to India.

About this time, my mother left her husband at Dekyil and came to live near Dütsi Tel. She helped a sister of the tenth Trungpa Rinpoche with the dairy work; she could not come inside the monastery but I was able to go out to see her, and she brought me milk, cream, and curds about once a fortnight. A year or so later her husband died and she never went back to her village.

Since I was now eleven years old I had to spend my time on more advanced work. I was called back to Dütsi Tel to take the bodhisattva vow although I had already taken it informally at the time of the wangkur. The vow is as follows:

> In the presence of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas and of my teacher Rölpa Dorje, I vow to proceed toward enlightenment. I accept all creatures as my father and mother with infinite compassion. Henceforth for their benefit I will practice the transcendental virtues (paramitas)

of liberality, discipline, patience, diligence, meditative concentration, wisdom (prajna), skillful means (upaya), spiritual power, aspiration, gnosis (jnana). Let my master accept me as a future buddha, but as remaining a boddhisattva without entering nirvana so long as a single blade of grass remains unenlightened.

Instead of returning to Dorje Khyung Dzong, Apho Karma took me to Dechen Chöling, Rölpa Dorje's retreat center, for I was now to study directly under him. His appearance was unusual, for he was quite bald with a trimly pointed beard. He was very strict on keeping all rules and insisted about the need for scholastic accuracy; at rites he officiated with the greatest competence, and he had exceptional knowledge about the art of chanting. But with all this strictness, he was very gentle and understanding and always seemed to be happy in his retreat surrounded by bird and animal life; much of his time he spent in writing.

The center for retreats stood on the slope of a mountain looking over the valley below and the mountains beyond it. Willows and scented juniper were dotted about the grass-covered hillside. The retreat was at a high altitude, and nearly every morning the mists would wreath the slopes, obscuring the valley below; Tulku Rölpa Dorje sometimes called it the Garden of the Mists. I very much enjoyed this change, and so did Apho Karma, who had himself studied under the regent abbot.

Rölpa Dorje lived by himself in a beautiful cave with the front walled in to form a cell; he had painted the inside a soft orange color, and had stuck small pictures cut out of books or small woodprints on some of the surfaces, and had hewed cupboards in the walls; at one side there was a shrine of sculptured stone. Among his ornaments was a collection of small religious pieces which he would allow me to play with. The cave was complete with its own little kitchen, for Rölpa Dorje preferred to look after himself. Stone steps led steeply down from the cave to the retreat center which was some way down.

Usually, only four monks lived in the center for their four-year period of retreat, but there were houses nearby from which some fifteen other monks could attend the course, while at the back of the mountain, in another small valley, a nunnery had been established, mainly used as a retreat center for some forty nuns, but also serving a number of lay disciples.

* * *

At Dechen Chöling Apho Karma put me to more advanced general studies and also gave me some lessons in the art of poetry; Rölpa Dorje took over my instruction in primary Buddhist metaphysics. He thought that I should now begin *ngöndro* (the "prelude"), as an introduction for further understanding of vajrayana. This preparation for spiritual development includes:

1. 100,000 full prostrations
2. 100,000 recitations of the triple refuge
3. 100,000 recitations of the Vajrasattva mantra
4. 100,000 symbolic offerings
5. Finally 100,000 recitations of the mantra of guru yoga, or "Union with the Teacher"

At the same time five subjects must be contemplated:

1. The rare privilege given to one to receive spiritual teaching in this life
2. The impermanence attaching to life and to everything else
3. The cause and effect of karma
4. The understanding of suffering
5. The necessity for devotion

I was deeply affected by all this; living in this place, studying these teachings, and constantly meditating, I began to develop greater depths of understanding, as a preparation for the way of life that lay ahead of me.

One day while I was engrossed in this teaching, and actually in the act of meditation and prostration, my secretary Chandzö Kargyen suddenly appeared to tell us that Chinese troops were approaching our monastery. We had heard months before that there was a number of troops in Jyekundo, though until now they had not been seen beyond the town. Chandzö Kargyen had had a message that they were in occupation at Namgyal Tse, but owing to its being three days' journey from Dütsi Tel, this news had not been confirmed, nor did he know if the monastery was still standing or not; he had come at once to warn us. This sudden movement of troops might mean that the Chinese were about to use force in order to occupy the whole of Tibet. Since we were already

under Chinese control, this new move seemed suspicious; could it mean that they intended to destroy all the monasteries and towns and to capture the important people in every district? We held a consultation; a second messenger arrived to tell us that on the route the Communists had followed no villages or monasteries had been disturbed as the army had only marched through. He brought with him a large poster which the Communists were distributing all over the district. Under the signature of the commander-in-chief, it said that the Red Army was coming to help the Tibetans; they would do no damage and would respect the feudal system and the religion of the people.

We decided that though the Communists were apparently not intending to harm us, it would be wise to safeguard the treasures of our monastery by storing them in a more secure place. If it became necessary we could escape ourselves, for transport was ready at hand; after this, my secretary went back to Dütsi Tel. For a couple of days all seemed quiet; only the herdsmen had seen the Chinese troops as a string of lights silently passing the village in single file in the darkness. In the morning when Apho Karma went out to collect firewood, he could see the campfires all around in the valley. He waited until I had finished my meditation and was having breakfast and then told me what he had seen; when the sun came out we could distinguish the glint on the soldiers' packs as the long file went farther afield. Any visitors who came to see us told us how the Chinese had always paid for anything that they had requisitioned, and that the troops looked in very poor condition and seemed to be short of food, but also to have plenty of silver money. They continued to pass through day after day on their way to Chamdo, and though they met with some resistance from the troops under a gallant officer called Muja Depön near Lathog, they brushed it aside. Surmang had been asked to provide them with guides, but managed to evade doing so. It was all very worrying.

FIVE

In the Steps of the Tenth Trungpa

EVER SINCE Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen had visited Dütsi Tel when I was nine years old, his presence had been foremost in my mind. He had planted a spiritual seed; I wanted to go to him for extended teaching, and while I was at Rölpa Dorje's center I had felt more strongly than ever that the time had now come for me to go to my guru.

At the end of the year I returned to Dütsi Tel with Apho Karma; the lamas seemed satisfied with my studies and as I was nearly twelve, they encouraged me to be more independent over deciding what I wanted to do. I spoke to Apho Karma about my wish to go to Jamgön Kongtrül, for I knew that the monastic committee was thinking that I should go on the traditional tour to meet people in the district. However, he gave me no direction, and only said that the decision for what I would do must come from myself.

I was invited to the retreat center of Dorje Khyung Dzong for the New Year. It was a very quiet and spiritual atmosphere, but I felt a little disturbed thinking about the decision I would so soon have to make. The venerable Karma Tendzin was the superior (*druppön*) there; he had been a devoted disciple of my predecessor and had known me for many years, as had most of the senior monks at the center. I asked him to advise me, but he impressed upon me that I was now old enough to think for myself. Just then, the venerable Togden Tsepten was on a visit to the center, who had not only received teaching from the tenth Trungpa Tulku, but had been his constant companion and server and was with

him at his death; so I put my problem before him, and his answer was to tell me in great detail much of the life story of my predecessor.

The Story of the Tenth Trungpa Tulku Rinpoche

The tenth Trungpa Tulku had been given a very strict training from boyhood to prepare him for the duties of supreme abbot of Surmang. At nineteen he attained his majority, being considered ready to take full responsibility for the government of the abbey although he would still be under guidance to some extent. He realized that in order to develop his own spirituality, being thereby enabled to lead others, he must have further training in meditation, which he saw was more important than administering his monastery.

He felt a compelling urge to receive teaching from Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche, for when he was quite young he had heard the name of this great guru mentioned and had been suddenly stirred by a recollection that he had been in a spiritual relationship with him in a former life. The monastic committee, however, had other plans for him; they wanted him first to work for Surmang, it being customary in Tibet that when an abbot reached manhood, he should tour the district and give his blessing to the people; during such a tour he would be invited to preach and to perform rites; he would receive many gifts, and the fame and wealth of his monastery would be increased. Though the tenth Trungpa neither liked nor approved of this procedure, he nevertheless felt obliged to follow the wishes of his senior advisors, so he set off on the tour accompanied by his bursar, while his secretary remained in charge of Dütsi Tel.

The tour was very successful and brought in many donations for Surmang. This greatly encouraged the bursar, for since the death of the ninth incarnate abbot twenty years had passed, during which the monastery had received very few offerings; it needed material help. So Trungpa Tulku was persuaded to go on another tour the next year; this should have lasted for three months, but about halfway through he felt he could no longer delay going to see his guru.

From babyhood he had been told about Jamgön Kongtrül; how he had been brought up by the abbot of Palpung Monastery as his spiritual son. As he grew older he had wanted to obtain wider instruction and

had traveled for many years, visiting over one hundred gurus of all the schools of Buddhism to be found in Tibet. On his return to Palpung visitors came from all parts of the country to receive instruction from him, for which purpose he established a center near the monastery where he himself composed over eighty volumes of scholarly and spiritual precepts. Before the abbot of Palpung died, he appointed Jamgön Kongtrül to be the spiritual leader of the line of the Karma Kagyü school.

At the time when Trungpa Tulku made the last-moment decision to go to his guru, he and his monks were encamped beside a river and he knew if he could but get away and cross it, then Palpung Monastery lay some ten days' journey further on. He made a plan and confided part of it to his special friend Yange: He told him that he would give the monks a great treat, a picnic by the riverbank; they were to have a plentiful supply of food and tea, and the customary discipline of not talking after proscribed hours would be relaxed. That evening Yange was to prepare a bag of roast barley flour (tsampa) and leave it with his horse, which must be ready saddled, behind some nearby bushes. At this, Yange was much alarmed, for he realized that he was planning to escape.

The monks thoroughly enjoyed the picnic, especially the relaxation of the rule of silence, and they chatted on till the small hours of the morning, when drowsiness overtook them. Seeing this, Trungpa Tulku stole away, mounted his horse, and put it at the river which was in spate as the snow was thawing. He was ready to drown rather than miss the opportunity of training under the guru who meant so much to him. The horse managed to breast the current and on reaching the farther side the abbot decided to continue on foot, since riding implies a desire for power and for material possessions, so he tore off a piece of his robe and tied it to his horse's back, as the customary sign that it had been ceremonially freed by a lama and must not be ill-treated by whoever caught it. He then set the horse free and walked on. The horse recrossed the river and returned to the camp, but the flapping of the piece of robe made it restive, and approaching one of the tents it rubbed against it to get rid of this annoyance and in doing so knocked down the tent. This awoke the sleepers who, seeing the horse, thought it must have broken from its tether. However, when they saw it was saddled and that the saddle was one used by their abbot, they were extremely disturbed and went to Trungpa Tulku's tent. It was empty, and some of his clothes were arranged to look like a sleeping figure in the bed. Rushing out, they woke up the entire camp. All the monks examined the horse and found that it

was wet; they also recognized the robe, and were forced to the conclusion that their abbot had left them and crossed the river.

Since Trungpa Tulku was quite unused to walking, they thought that he would soon be in difficulties and that they must look for him, so they split up in four groups to search up and down both banks of the river. The group who were going in the southerly direction on the further bank found a saddle rug which had belonged to the abbot, but beyond this there were no more traces. As a matter of fact, Trungpa Tulku had purposely dropped it there to mislead them.

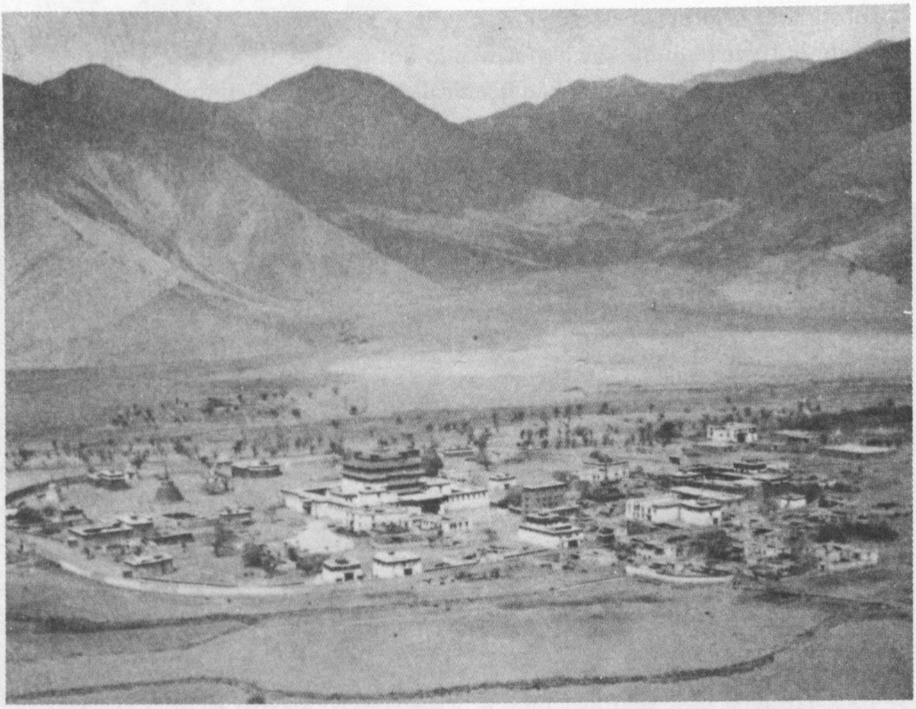
Traveling northward, he was all but overwhelmed by a sense of utter desolation; never before had he been all alone, having always been surrounded by monks to attend and guard him. He walked fast until he was exhausted and then lay down to sleep. The sound of the rushing river and of dogs barking in a distant village seemed to him like a death knell; this was such a complete change from his very ordered life.

He was now on the same road that he had taken with his party on their outward journey; then he had talked and questioned many of the local people about the general lie of the land and what track led to Palpung Monastery, and now as soon as dawn broke he walked on and arrived early in the morning at the house of a wealthy landowner whom he had visited on the way through. The husband opened the door at his knock, but failed to recognize the visitor; however, since he was in monk's robes he invited him to come in. When his wife appeared she gave a cry of surprise, for she immediately realized who it was, and her surprise was all the greater at seeing him alone. Trungpa Tulku asked them to shelter him and made them promise not to tell anyone of his whereabouts, since the reason for his being there was a great spiritual need. They were very frightened, but felt obliged to obey their abbot, so they gave him food and hid him in a large store cupboard, where he remained all that day, and when some of the searching monks came to the house to ask if he had been seen, the landowner and his wife kept to their promise.

In the evening Trungpa Tulku said that he must move on. His hosts were extremely upset that he should go on foot and unattended. They begged him to tell them what had occurred and wanted to know if there had been any misunderstanding between him and his bursar. They suggested, if this had been the case, that perhaps they could arrange for the matter to be cleared up, for their family was in a position to use its in-

fluence. Trungpa Rinpoche told them that he did not wish this, and with the greatest reluctance they let him leave, knowing that, as their abbot, it was his place to command and theirs to obey.

As he was making his way beside the river, he heard horses close behind him, so he hid in some bushes on the bank and the riders passed by. They proved to be the bursar with a mounted party; after a short interval he was able to resume his walk and in the early morning reached another house where he was known. But by now the bursar had alerted the whole neighborhood, so the family was informed of the situation; nevertheless, they took him in and offered to look after him, again hiding him in a store cupboard. As for the bursar, when he could find no further footmarks, he told the monks to search every house in the district. He was dissatisfied with the answers to his inquiries from the family with



Samye, the first monastic institution in Tibet.

whom Trungpa Tulku was sheltering and ordered the monks to look in every nook and corner which they did; they found him in the cupboard where he was still hiding.

The bursar embraced him with tears in his eyes and asked why he was causing them so much anxiety. He replied that he had private reasons with which no one might interfere. They argued all day, but the abbot gave no indication of his plans, though he refused to return to Surmang. Whereupon the bursar sent back for instructions from Namgyal Tse, and Dütsi Tel, from which, however, no reply could be expected for ten days or so.

When the message was received at Surmang, a meeting was called of all the heads of the monasteries and the representatives of the laity to discuss the matter; all agreed that their abbot must be requested to return. On receiving this reply the bursar endeavored to persuade Trungpa Tulku to follow the wishes of his people, but from being a very gentle and docile man, he now seemed to have become very strong-willed and obstinate. Another messenger was sent to Surmang to tell them that in spite of their requests the abbot would not change his mind.

After a second meeting had been called it was decided that if Trungpa Tulku could not be persuaded to come back, he should be allowed to go on his way, but with some monks and horses to serve him. When the messenger returned with this ultimatum, Trungpa Tulku was really upset, and even more so when a party of monks with horses arrived shortly afterward. He protested against all this fuss, saying that he was a simple man whose object in running away had been to escape from this complicated way of living.

His bursar and monks never ceased to argue with him, but instead of replying he preached to them on the vanity of leading a worldly life. A deadlock was reached when he said that to go with attendants and horses would ruin all that he wished to do. There is a Tibetan saying: "To kill a fish and give it to a starving dog has no virtue." The Buddha left his kingdom, fasted, and endured hardships in order to win enlightenment, and many saints and bodhisattvas had sacrificed their lives to follow the path of dharma.

Finally, the bursar, who was an old man, broke down and wept. He told Trungpa that he must take at least two monks to look after him, while the baggage could be carried on a mule. This advice, coming from so senior a monk who was also his uncle, he reluctantly agreed to accept



Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen.



Infant Tai Situ of Palpung.

Third incarnation of Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung.



Khenpo Gangshar.



and they started on their journey; the bursar insisted on accompanying the party. Traveling on foot was very tiring, but to everyone's surprise Trungpa seemed to acquire new strength and when the others were worn out, it was he who looked after them. The elderly bursar became ill with exhaustion, in spite of which, he said he really felt much happier, for the more he pondered on the teaching about the difference between the material and the spiritual way of life, the more he realized how right Trungpa Tulku was to follow this path.

After ten days they reached Palpung Monastery, which was the second in importance of the Karma Kagyü school. Trungpa Tulku was already well known to many of the monks, but since he did not wish to be recognized they went on at once to Jamgön Kongtrül's residence some three miles beyond.

Jamgön Kongtrül himself had had a premonition the day before, saying that he was expecting an important guest and that the guest room must be made ready. The monks thought he was referring to some royal personage with his attendants, or possibly to some great lama, and they eagerly watched for his arrival; however, no one appeared until late in the afternoon when four simple pilgrims with a single mule walked toward them and asked for accommodation. The monks told the travelers that, since an important visitor was already expected, the guest house adjoining Jamgön Kongtrül's residence was not free, therefore the travelers must find a lodging wherever they could.

The following morning Jamgön Kongtrül asked the monks if they had put his guests in the guest house; surprised, they replied that no one had turned up. The guru insisted that the expected guests had arrived and told them to make further enquiries. The four pilgrims were traced and Trungpa Tulku was recognized. The monks immediately took them to Jamgön Kontrül and were astonished when the great teacher showed no sign of surprise at the manner in which the party had traveled. After the interview Trungpa Tulku had a long private talk with his guru, who arranged for him to occupy a house with his companions some fifteen minutes' walk away, where an old monk would see to their wants. Trungpa Tulku immediately settled down to his studies, with his guru instructing him in meditation while the master of studies (*khenpo*) superintended his academic work.

For a year he was left alone, then his secretary and some monks came

to see him bringing gifts and money. The secretary had a private talk with Jamgön Kontrül and asked him to encourage their abbot to return to Surmang on completion of his studies; his guru agreed that he must go back some day, but not immediately, for he and also his attendant monks were making such progress that it would be wrong to disturb them; he added that the elderly bursar could now return to his monastery.

After the visitors had left, Trungpa Tulku gave away all the gifts they had brought, leaving himself and the two monks with hardly anything to eat, so that they were obliged to go round with their begging bowls. The two monks were naturally very upset over this, for while the bursar had been with them there had always been enough for their requirements and they could not understand this new phase. Trungpa Tulku, however, insisted that austerity was the right course and the only way to follow the Buddha's example, as well as that of Milarepa. They must therefore beg until they had received the bare necessities of food to last out the winter. Moreover they had very little butter for their lamps; incense however was cheap and when blown upon produced a faint glow by which Trungpa Rinpoche was able to light up a few lines at a time of the book he was studying.

Now that the monks of Palpung and the people in the district knew of Trungpa Tulku's presence, they kept coming to visit him which he found very disturbing to his meditations.

After three years Surmang expected their abbot to return, and again sent a party of monks to fetch him. This time Düldzin, the senior secretary's nephew, came with them. They found the two monks who were with Trungpa Tulku very disturbed in mind; the austere way of living that had been imposed upon them was affecting their health. However, Trungpa wished to stay on at Palpung until his studies were completed, so it was decided that they should return to Surmang with the party and that Düldzin, at his own request, should remain to look after Trungpa. However, this arrangement did not prove altogether a success, for he gave Trungpa Tulku a lot of trouble. The two men had very different approaches to life: The abbot was a strict vegetarian and wanted everything to be as simple as possible, whereas Düldzin expected to have meat and disliked such plain living. Later Trungpa Tulku realized that these difficulties had been a lesson to him and that lamas had often to experience this sort of trouble and must learn to control their own impatience

and accept the fact that their attendants could not be expected to live at their own high level of austerity.

At the end of a further three years, Jamgön Kongtrül considered that Trungpa Rinpoche had made such progress that he could be trusted to act as a teacher himself and to carry on the message of dharma to others. Trungpa, for his part, felt that if he was to carry on this work he required still more experience; he should travel to seek further instruction, as his guru had done, and live a life given up to meditation. However, Jamgön Kongtrül pointed out that he must compromise between taking such a path and his monasteries' need for him to return to them. He said, "It must be according to your destiny; conformably with the will of your past nine incarnations your duty lies in governing your monasteries. This is your work and you must return to it. If you take full charge you can rule them in the way you feel to be right. You must establish five meditation centers, the first in your own monastery and the other four in neighboring ones. This will be a beginning; in this way your teaching will not confined to your own monks, but you will be able to spread it more widely."

Trungpa Tulku followed his guru's directions; the parting was a sad moment for them both, and after a farewell party he began his return journey on foot. Back at Surmang, he immediately set to work to establish a meditation center and to put the affairs of his monasteries in order. While he was thus engaged news came that Jamgön Kongtrül had died; however, in spite of this deep sorrow he carried on with his work of establishing the four other meditation centers, all of which continued to flourish until the Communists took possession of Tibet in my lifetime.

As Jamgön Kongtrül's entrusted successor, the tenth Trungpa Tulku later became the guru of both Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen and Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung. At Surmang, he gained more and more followers and such was the example of the simplicity of his life that he was regarded as a second Milarepa.

When he was about fifty years old there was a border dispute between the Chinese and Tibetan governments and in the course of the fighting much damage was done to both Namgyal Tse and Dütsi Tel. Trungpa Tulku himself was taken prisoner; worn out by forced marches on an empty stomach and already weakened by his austere vegetarian diet, he became ill. His devotee, the king of Lhathok, succeeded in

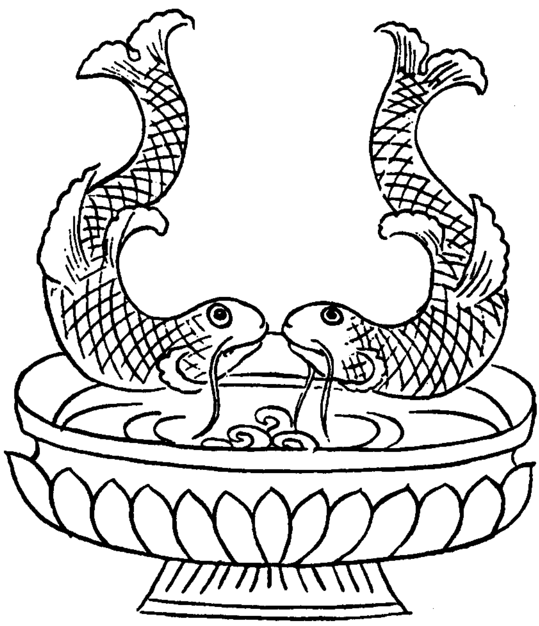
obtaining his release and managed to persuade him to take better care of himself by traveling sometimes on horseback instead of always going on foot. When he returned to Surmang there was much work ahead for him; the monasteries had to be rebuilt and at the same time he had to continue his teaching. In spite of the fact that he was growing old and was in poor health he only allowed himself three to four hours for sleep and gave his strength unstintingly to the work of rebuilding the monasteries. He always maintained that if one followed the true path financial help would be given when it was really needed. He accepted the destruction of the monasteries as a lesson in nonattachment which had always held a foremost place in the Buddha's teaching. The lamas considered that their supreme abbot's residence should be furnished with every comfort, but he himself insisted on complete simplicity.

Soon, Trungpa Tulku realized that he was approaching the end of his life. One day he had a dream that he was a young child and that his mother was wearing the style of headdress peculiar to northeastern Tibet. When a new robe was being made for him he told his secretary that it should be a small one; on the secretary asking why, he turned it away as a joke. Trungpa used to say that he felt sorry for his horse, for soon he would no longer be able to walk and would cause it more trouble; the secretary was disturbed at this remark, for he thought that this meant that his abbot was really losing his health.

In 1938 while on tour Trungpa suddenly said that he must get back to his monastery; however, he found it impossible to change his plans as he had received so many invitations from various devotees. When one of the king of Lhathok's ministers asked him to visit him, he accepted, though this meant a long journey; the lama added that he might have to ask him to be one of the most important hosts of his lifetime. He arrived on the day of the full moon in a very happy mood, but did what was for him an unusual thing; on arriving at the house he took off his socks and his overrobe and, turning to his monks, told them to prepare for a very special rite. A meal was served, but he did not feel inclined to eat and having said grace, he told them to put the food before the shrine. Then he lay down saying, "This is the end of action." These were his last words: Lifting himself up he took the meditation posture, closed his eyes, and entered samadhi.

His monks thought he was in a coma, and one doctor among them

examined him, drawing some of his blood and burning herbs to revive him, but with no result. The monks stood by him all the time reciting sutras and mantras; he looked as if he was still alive and remained in the same meditation posture until midnight when there was a flash of light and the body fell over.



The eye of gnosis.

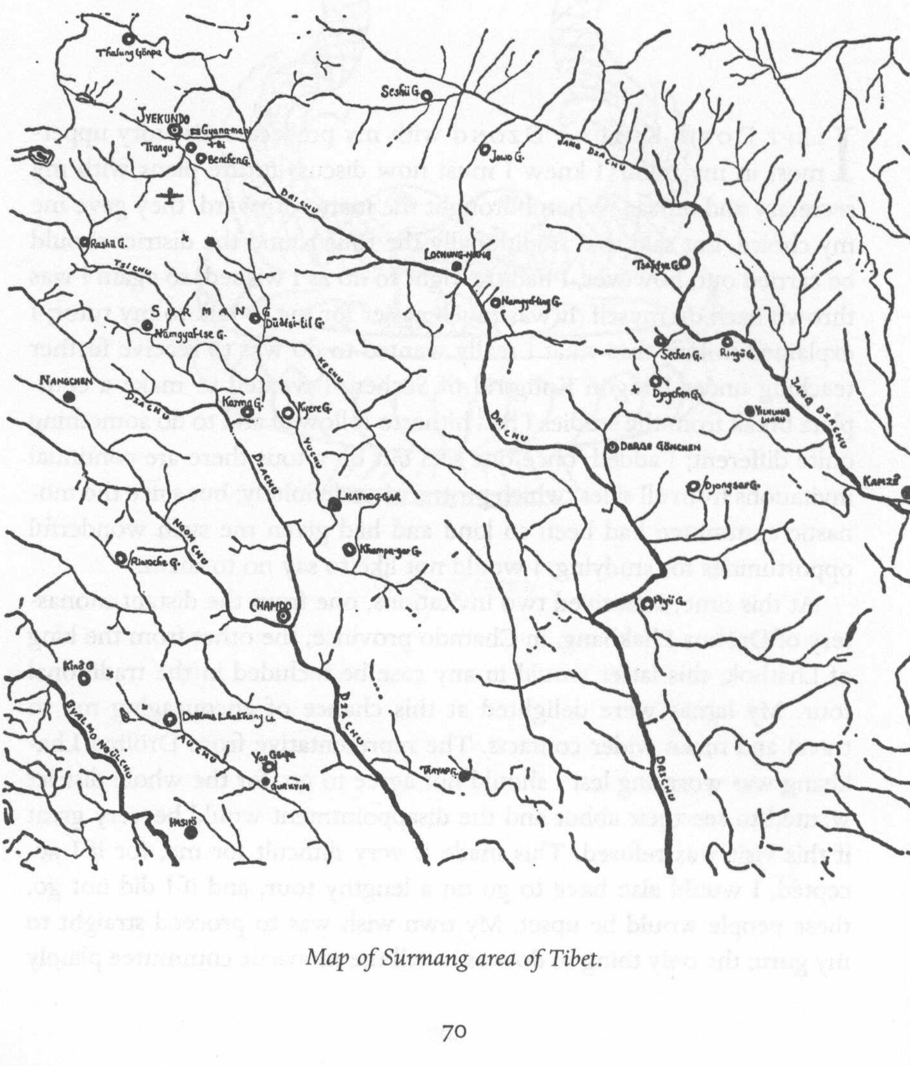
SIX

I Go to My Guru

I LEFT DORJE KHYUNG DZONG with my predecessor's story uppermost in my mind. I knew I must now discuss future plans with my secretary and bursar. When I brought the matter forward, they gave me my choice, but said that traditionally the tour round the district should be carried out; however, I had the right to do as I wished, so again I was thrown back on myself. It was much easier for me to talk to my tutor; I explained to him that what I really wanted to do was to receive further teaching under Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen. I wanted to make a complete break from the studies I had hitherto followed and to do something quite different; I added, once one sets out on a tour there are continual invitations from all sides, which protract it indefinitely; but since the monastic committee had been so kind and had given me such wonderful opportunities for studying, I would not like to say no to them.

At this time, I received two invitations, one from the distant monastery of Drölma Lhakhang, in Chamdo province, the other from the king of Lhathok; this latter would in any case be included in the traditional tour. My lamas were delighted at this chance of encouraging me to travel and make wider contacts. The representative from Drölma Lhakhang was worrying lest I should not agree to go, for the whole district wanted to see their abbot and the disappointment would be very great if this visit was refused. This made it very difficult for me, for if I accepted, I would also have to go on a lengthy tour, and if I did not go, these people would be upset. My own wish was to proceed straight to my guru; the only thing to do was to tell the monastic committee plainly

that I must be free to go to Sechen before the end of the year. I said that I was very anxious not to go against their wishes, so we would have to make a compromise; finally it was arranged that the tour should take place, including a visit to the principality of Lhathok, for this was not so far away. I would not, however, visit Drölma Lhakhang; a disciple of the tenth Trungpa Tulku would have to go instead. Before setting out I asked my secretary to promise that on my return I could go to Sechen; he should also make all arrangements at Surmang for my intended absence.



Map of Surmang area of Tibet.

Our traveling party was organized with a good deal of pomp. There were thirty monks on horseback and eighty mules to carry the baggage. I was still only twelve and, being so young, I was not expected to preach long sermons; mostly I had to perform rites, read the scriptures aloud, and impart blessings. We started from the highlands and traveled down to the cultivated land; I was able to see how all these different people lived as we passed through many changes of scenery. Of course I did not see the villagers quite as they were in their everyday lives, for wherever we went all was in festival; everyone was excited and looking forward to the special religious services, so that we had little time for rest. I missed the routine of my early life, but found it all very exciting.

When we visited Lhathok, the king had to follow the established tradition by asking us to perform the religious rites according to ancient custom. We were lodged in one of the palaces, from where we could look down on a school that the Chinese had recently established. A Communist flag hung at the gate, and when it was lowered in the evenings the children had to sing the Communist national anthem. Lessons were given in both Chinese and Tibetan, including much indoctrination about the benefits China was bringing to Tibet. Singing and dancing were encouraged and I felt that it was a sign of the times that the monastery drum was used to teach the children to march. Being young myself I was keenly interested, though this distortion worried me; a religious instrument should not have been used for a secular purpose, nor for mere amusement. A detachment of Chinese officials sent from their main headquarters at Chamdo lived in the king's palace together with a Tibetan interpreter, while various teachers had been brought to Lhathok to organize the school, which was one of many that the Chinese were setting up in all the chief places in Tibet. The local people's reactions were very unfavorable. In the town the Communists had stuck posters or painted slogans everywhere, even on the walls of the monastery; they consisted of phrases like "We come to help you" and "The liberation army is always at the people's service."

The tour took about three months and I longed to get back to Surmang so as to be able to start on the visit to my guru. I realized that had I been older and able to give spiritual guidance to my people, it would have been necessary to go on such a tour; but being only twelve I could not feel it was important to have all this grandeur; and though the tour

still followed the traditional pattern, it seemed to have lost much of its inner meaning. These feelings may partly have been due to my youth.

On my return I stopped for a few days at Namgyal Tse to say goodbye. I had reason to be grateful to the monks at Dütsi Tel who had made all arrangements for my journey to Sechen. Two cows were ready to provide us with milk, and twenty mules which would be loaded with the baggage. Several of the novices, especially those interested in advanced studies, wanted to come to study at the same time, but only my tutor and two monks were allowed to come with me. My secretary, Chandzö Kargyen, was so anxious for my well-being that he chose to come to see for himself how I settled in. Some of the monks were not very pleased that my lessons in religious ritual had had to be curtailed in favor of intensive studies in meditation and metaphysics; but for me, the joy and excitement of receiving instruction from my own guru was overwhelming. I had wanted to take the simple path of my predecessor and do the journey on foot, but my tutor and secretary thought I was too young for this and must be looked after; so we went on horseback and slept in tents at night. It took ten days to reach Sechen; the whole journey was most enjoyable, for the scenery was superb and each village seemed different, the local inhabitants wore the distinctive clothing and followed the customs of their particular locality.

We arrived at Jamgön Kongtrül's retreat house on my thirteenth birthday. My monks had expected a large and well-appointed building, but it was very simple and unpretentious. His old mother lived with him and also one Khenpo Gangshar, together with his own mother; the two women did the cooking and looked after the cows. Jamgön Kongtrül's old tutor acted as secretary and attendant, and Khenpo Gangshar's young nephew was there to run messages, etc. Everyone spent much of his time in meditation.

Khenpo Gangshar had been brought up from his earliest childhood by Jamgön Kongtrül who had considered him as his spiritual son and had educated him with the greatest care, for his father had been killed and his mother on becoming a nun had asked Jamgön Kongtrül to look after the boy. Gangshar had always been extremely studious and would apply himself day and night with hardly a break. He had memorized hundreds of texts and received the degree of master of studies (khenpo) at a very early age.

Since we arrived on the day of the full moon, my guru was fasting

and all was in silence; when one of my monks went forward no one spoke to him, but a note was sent asking us to come in. My guru showed great joy on seeing me and even before I had taken off my outer robe he came out of the door to present a scarf, beckoning me to enter without words. I told him about our journey, and when I mentioned the two cows he looked pleased, for he had wanted me to make a long stay, and since my monastery had thought fit to send the animals with me, this showed that they also expected me to do the same. I asked my guru to explain to the secretary Chandzö Kargyen that a prolonged stay was advisable; I said that if this suggestion was made on the very first day it would carry more weight. The following day, when he could talk, my guru spoke to the secretary and Apho Karma; they both replied, "The incarnation of your guru is in your hands; hitherto we have done our best to educate him, but now this task is yours." Chandzö Kargyen then returned to Surmang.

Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche decided that I should spent my first month studying academic subjects as well as meditation under Khenpo Gangshar. We were to start with the *Arya-ratna-traya-anusmriti Sutra* (recollection of the Buddha, his teaching and his disciples'). Learning this by heart meant very hard work from morning till midnight. He himself was prepared to give the initiation (wangkur) on the *Treasury of the Mine of Precious Teachings* (*Rinchen Terdzö*), by the great Jamgön Kongtrül who made this vast collection of doctrines at a time when some of these teachings were nearly forgotten; he had searched for them throughout Tibet. The Rinchen Terdzö is of the utmost importance, for it contains all the most profound doctrines that he himself had received from the tenth Trungpa Tulku.

Jamgön Kongtrül began his own preparations for the rite at four in the morning and we pupils had to be in the hall from five until eight in the evening. The wangkur started with morning devotions, and special offerings were made on the tenth and the twenty-fifth day of the month. During the six months of the rite there were only three breaks when our guru was unwell. Hundreds of monks and some abbots of neighboring monasteries attended the course which was restricted to those who had already done the introductory practice; they camped around in tents. This was a very moving gathering, for all were aware that they belonged to the family of the dharma. During the whole of the rites Apho Karma kept a very strict eye on me, for I was placed with several other tulkus

(incarnate lamas) who, being young, were apt to be a little frivolous, and though I was actually the youngest I was expected to behave; however, a kindly Nepalese monk who had been in India and had seen modern mechanical inventions, noticing my youth, gave me my first toy, a little engine which he had made himself; a string wound round its front wheel set it in motion in the same way as a top.

The Rinchen Terdzö finished with the enthronement wangkur at which a disciple is chosen and given special authority to carry on his guru's teaching. Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche conferred on me this honor; I was enthroned, and he put his own robes on me, handing me his ritual bell and *dorje* (thunderbolt scepter) with many other symbolic objects, including his books. I felt very shy, as there were many lamas there of much greater learning than I who, I thought, would be far more suitable; however, my tutor and the monks were pleased to decide otherwise on that day.

When the gathering was over my guru advised me to join the seminary under Khenpo Gangshar, saying that he himself would give me meditation instruction every fortnight.

There was accommodation for about one hundred students in the seminary which stood on the banks of the river some four miles distant from Jamgön Kongtrül's residence; each student had his own cubicle where he slept and studied; these were in long rows connected by a covered passage and their windows looked out on a stretch of grass between the lines. Stoves were placed in the corridor beside each cubicle for us to do our own cooking, this being done for us only on festival days. The kitchen staff supplied us with tea and hot water and distributed the required fuel; if this was insufficient we would collect wood for ourselves. Breakfast was finished before five, when a gong was rung for us to begin our homework, and at eight a second bell was sounded for us to attend the khenpo's lecture. Before giving this he would answer any questions from the students who might want to have the previous day's work clarified. After this our names were shaken up in a bowl, and the one whose name was drawn had to reread the scriptures of the day before and to put forward his own commentary. Then the khenpo began the lesson of the day with careful explanations. This was followed by group tuition, and my tutor, one of the *kyorpöns* (tutors) who had been especially chosen for this office would decide if I should join the group or go to my cubicle to receive private tuition from him. I started with Maitreya's

works on transcendental wisdom (*prajnaparamita*) which is one of the main themes of the mahayana, the school of the greater vehicle (Dr. Conze has made some excellent English translations of these under the name *Perfection of Wisdom*); the basic trends of the lesser vehicle I had already studied in my own monastery.

The teaching staff at the seminary consisted of Khenpo Gangshar Rinpoche as the principal with five kyorpöns as tutors under him: the term *kyorpön* is equivalent to a *geshe* in the Geluk and Sakya schools, something like the English doctor of divinity. There were also several junior kyorpöns. The discipline and behavior of the students were looked after by a senior lama called the *gekö*.

Sechen was founded toward the end of the sixteenth century and was one of the leading monasteries of the Mindröling tradition of the Nyingma, the first monastic order to be established in Tibet. It was famed for the profoundness of the doctrines taught there and also for its very strict discipline. When I was there, there were eight incarnate lamas besides the two abbots, with some three hundred bhikshus and two hundred novices in the monastery. The buildings more or less filled the valley, with the main assembly hall in the center. The walls of the hall were festooned with open-work embroideries and had frescoes depicting historical events; numerous shrine rooms opened out from it, and one of them contained an extensive library; in another room there were very ancient images of the eight "spiritual sons" (bodhisattvas) of the Buddha. There was a more modern image of Manjushri, the patron of wisdom, which was heavily gilt and decorated with precious stones; besides these there was a figure of Rigdzin Gyurme Dorje, one of the founders of the Nyingma school, made out of consecrated herbs and clay; it was a very rare and ancient piece of work. The whole place had an atmosphere of remarkable vitality.

My first impression was the peace and calm of the place, for the monks lived under very strict discipline though all were very happy. The drums and other musical instruments were particularly soft toned; the monks were not allowed to raise their voices and had to sit very still while meditating. Those who carried out the rites had to be accurate in every detail and all the chanting had to be done from memory, as no books were allowed. The ritual was slightly different from that practiced in other schools, but I found that it had great dignity in its perfection.

There were two abbots at Sechen; Tulku Rabjam Rinpoche was a great personality both spiritually and because of his wide vision in regard to practical affairs; I owe much to his teaching. He had a striking appearance because of his very large mustache, not common among our people. The second abbot, Tulku Gyaltsap Rinpoche, who was the incarnation of one of the tenth Trungpa Tulku's gurus, was an outstandingly saintly man and a gifted writer; he was small of stature and radiated friendliness to all who came near him; there was a deep understanding between us and his residence was like a second home to me.

By now I was fourteen and completely happy and satisfied with the work; I looked forward to the summer vacation when we would have more leisure and I would have more opportunities to be with my guru. At the beginning of the vacation I was staying at one of the hermitages where I could walk in the woods and practice meditation in serene solitude. Although it is natural for boys to play and want to climb trees, under my guru's instruction I had to control such impulses; but here everything was such as to satisfy me with the path I had chosen.

On the last day, while I was walking, meditating, and enjoying the beauty of nature, a thunderstorm burst overhead. This sudden transition from peace to conflict symbolized what lay ahead of me, for running back to the hermitage I found that a monk had arrived from my own monastery to ask if it would be possible for me to return to Surmang as one of the senior lamas, the third next to the regent abbot, had died. Apho Karma made the most of this fact, as the responsibility of being left in sole charge of me was getting too much for him and this made him very nervous; he considered that I was overworking and thought that I might have a breakdown, so he wanted an excuse to take me away. He could not have explained all this in a letter, and he now decided without consulting Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche that I should return to Surmang. When the matter was put before my guru he was rather upset, but since my tutor was so insistent he found it impossible to argue with him and finally agreed that I should return to my monastery. To me he said "You have received many teachings; you can now teach and practice them yourself, but later on you must come back and complete your training." A farewell party was arranged, attended by the two abbots of Sechen and some of the senior lamas.

The following day when I went to say good-bye to my guru he told

me that, though I must now leave, he had had a dream the night before and had seen a half-moon rising in the sky; everyone was saying, "This is a full moon": "This means," he said, "that you are the moon, but not yet really full, for your studies are not complete." He gave me further advice on meditation and said sadly that he must not leave his room to say good-bye because his place was still within. I made a promise to myself that I would come back, and broken-hearted left that wonderful place.



The flower of compassion.

SEVEN

Death, Duties, and a Vision

As WE RODE DOWN the valley I looked back at my guru's white retreat in the midst of firs on the hillside and at the seminary I loved. I watched the river flowing between it and the monastery with its golden roof shining in the sunshine and I could not turn my eyes away until all were out of sight. Apho Karma was in great spirits, talking about our own monastery and the prospect of meeting his friends again, but my two monks and I were very sad, for we longed to be still at Sechen.

On the journey we had a lot of trouble with the horses and mules and most of our little party were also unwell. When we crossed the river Dri-chu, which here is some four hundred feet wide, it was in spate, and our boat made of yak's hide nearly capsized, while one of our horses was drowned.

The monks at Surmang were very surprised to see us, for though they had sent me the message, they had thought it unlikely that I would return before completion of my studies. When I arrived, they concluded that I must really have finished and expressed their delight. My tutor kept quiet, and I had to tell them that I had not completed my work. This worried them considerably and the regent abbots and secretaries felt that Apho Karma had made a mistake, particularly since the senior lama was already dead and the cremation had taken place with full rites, so that there was now no need for me to be there.

I had not long been back when a message was received asking me to partake in the funeral rites for Traleg Kyabgon Rinpoche, the abbot of

the neighboring monastery of Thrangu, who had just died. He had written in his will that he wished for this, since he had been a great friend of my predecessor. Thrangu lay some five miles south of Jyekundo. On our way we passed through the Pelthang airport which was being built by a number of Tibetans under Chinese engineers. It was a beautiful day with the sun shining over the broad valley, but its calm was disturbed by the roar of planes overhead; these were bringing all kinds of supplies, but since the runway was not completed the planes could not land and the packages were parachuted down.

Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung, who was to officiate at the rites, and I arrived simultaneously at Thrangu. We performed the ceremonies together for about two weeks. Everyone noticed that a change had come over Jamgön Kongtrül; he did not seem to be in good health.

I was obliged to return to Surmang, and before I left he said to me, "One is already dead, and one is going to die, this is the law of impermanence"; he was sure this would be our last meeting. He gave me his blessing by touching foreheads; this is the traditional way of imparting blessings between lamas of equal standing; then he said that this was to be regarded as a different kind of blessing, being the wangkur of the *chakra* (spiritual center) of the head which represents the union of "the hundred buddha families" (*tampa rig gya*). He laid stress on this being our last meeting; I asked him to promise that we should meet again; he said, "Yes, in one way or another."

I returned to Surmang by way of the valley of Bi where in the seventh century King Songtsan Gampo sent his ministers to receive and welcome the Chinese princess he was to marry. Here we saw the Buddhist sutras which the ministers had carved on the rocks while waiting for her arrival; some of these are in archaic Tibetan and others in Sanskrit, which goes to prove that King Songtsan Gampo was a Buddhist before he met the princess, in fact he had already sent his minister Sambhota of Thön to India to collect texts; it was the latter who first designed the Tibetan alphabet for the purpose of translating the Indian scriptures into our language.

While the princess was resting in the valley she saw these texts and added a huge image of Vairochana Buddha of over twenty feet in height which was carved in relief on the rock, with "the eight spiritual sons of Buddha" (bodhisattvas) beside it together with some ancient Sanskrit inscriptions. We held a short service before the image of Vairochana Buddha and went on to Surmang.

I had been back some three weeks when a messenger came from Thrangu to tell us that Jamgön Kongtrül had died; he brought an invitation to Rölpa Dorje, Garwang Rinpoche, and myself to officiate at the funeral rites. The messenger knew nothing of what had actually happened and simply said that Jamgön Kongtrül had died very suddenly. After the first shock I remembered how he had said good-bye to me. His death was a very great loss to the whole Kagyü school; my predecessor had been his guru and he had been the teacher of Gyalwa Karmapa. No one seemed more needed, by the whole order, in the present perplexing times. All Surmang was distressed by the news of his death and a great number of monks expressed the wish to attend the funeral.

We left hurriedly the following day and traveled day and night to Thrangu Monastery where we found everyone deeply saddened by the fact that their own abbot had died a few weeks before, and now by this second death. Jamgön Kongtrül's closest companions among the monks seemed more serene and told us what had happened. He had suddenly been taken ill and suffered great pain; it was thought that he had eaten some sort of unwholesome food. After he had been moved to the abbot's house of retreat the pain lessened, but his general condition became weaker. After three days he sent for his oldest attendant to write down his will which would be important for his followers, but he did not want anyone to know about it in case they showed too much emotion. He said that his rebirth would be near Lhasa among his relations, which would give comfort to his mother, and he gave an indication of the names of the parents and the time when he would come back. He wanted his body to be cremated and that Trungpa Tulku should take part in officiating, adding that everyone must realize that death is one of the aspects of impermanence; he only continued to take medicine to please the monks. One day he asked his attendant to look up the calendar and find an auspicious date. When the day came he awoke in the morning saying that he was feeling much stronger. He had his coverlet removed and sat up in the adamantine (vajra) posture; his breathing stopped, though his body remained as if meditating for some twenty-four hours after.

After the funeral ceremonies his possessions were distributed among those who had attended him; I was given his robe, some books, and his amulet case, also his little terrier; the dog remained with me for some three years and I became very attached to it. It used to follow me when

I was riding, but one day it went off hunting on its own and got trapped in a marmot's burrow.

Shortly after my return to Namgyal Tse, I was invited to visit Drölma Lhakhang. Accompanied by my bursar we started on the journey; this was our first sight of the new highway recently built by the Communists between China and Lhasa; it gave us a strange shock, this straight dark line cutting through our mountains, built by a foreign power. It was so broad and it ran right through fields and across the spreading landscape like a deep trench. As we halted beside it, a Chinese lorry came along like a great monster with guns sticking out at the top, and a long trail of dust following it. As the lorry drew nearer, the noise that it made echoed through the peaceful valley and we were aware of acrid petrol fumes. The Tibetans living nearby had grown accustomed to such sights, but our horses were terror stricken, as we were ourselves. The Chinese always drove straight ahead and stopped for no one; other travelers on the road were pushed aside, often with accidents to their horses and themselves. Looking back at night we watched the continual flow of the lighted lorries; we could not understand the headlamps, and when we saw the red ones in the rear we thought the vehicles were on fire.

Drölma Lhakhang lies about six days' journey from Chamdo, in the Pashö district. It is on the high plateau of Tsawa Gang and is surrounded by rocky hills with many lakes, a chilly region. One of the principal industries among these highlanders (drokpas) is that of weaving very fine cloth, for which purpose the people keep great flocks of sheep as well as the usual yaks; being compelled to move frequently to fresh pasturage, the herdsmen usually live in tents.

As we approached Drölma Lhakhang, the monastery prepared to make us welcome. First we were given curds and milk by a family of farmers who had been devotees of my predecessor; after which a lama from Drölma Lhakhang, who was waiting with them, offered me a ceremonial scarf as he made prostration. We then rode on until we met the young abbot Akong Tulku at the head of a procession to escort us to the monastery. They dismounted and also presented white scarves; one of my senior monks followed the traditional ceremonial of returning the scarves and hanging them round the necks of the givers. As we rode to the monastery, we were overtaken by a sudden thunderstorm with vivid lightning and hail. The Drölma Lhakhang monks and those from neighboring mon-

asteries with their abbots lined the approach to the monastery, where an orchestra on the roof played us in. Akong Tulku led me into the hall, holding an incense stick in his hand; then, after he had made obeisance before me three times we exchanged scarves. This was followed by my exchanging scarves in the same way with the abbots of the other monasteries. Every monk then came to offer me a scarf and to receive my blessing; to the senior lamas I gave it touching their foreheads with mine; to the other monks, I placed my hand on their heads. A monk stood beside me to hand each one a sacred "protection cord" as they came for my blessing. When all had returned to their places tea and rice were served to the whole Surmang party. My tea was poured into a jade cup on a gold and silver stand; the rice was served me in a beautiful bowl, also of jade, and white china cups and dishes were provided for my monks. It was all very formal; Akong Tulku was quiet and reserved, merely smiling all the time. We found that we were both of the selfsame age.

Drölma Lhakhang started as a hermitage about two hundred years ago and gradually grew into a monastery. There had been a succession of Kagyü mystics there, and it had always been a center of hospitality to spiritual teachers, while many hermits lived in its vicinity. The whole monastery had an atmosphere of serenity and spirituality, wherein it differed from some others I have seen which seemed to be more institutional.

At the time of my visit it held about 150 monks. The building stood on a strip of land beneath a range of hills, at the junction of the river Kulha Shung-chu and the Tsawa Au-chu. Behind, on the farther side of the hill, lay a whitewashed hermitage; its front wall supported on red pillars seemed to grow out of the rock. It had been built over one of the caves where the great guru Padmasambhava meditated after he had established Buddhism in Tibet. It appears that this hill had been known to very early men, for near the hermitage we found some primitive and curious rock paintings. They portrayed men on small horses done in red ochre and were protected by a surface that looked like talc. There was also an indication that very early Buddhists had lived near the site of the monastery, for at the end of the strip of land where it was built there was a single upstanding rock, and in one of its crevices sheltered from the wind and weather there was a sculpture in relief of the *dakini* (female divinity) Vajrayogini.

Across the river in front of the monastery rose the very high mountain called Kulha Ngang Ya which the people of the ancient Bön religion

regarded as a powerful god and as one of the guardians of Tibet: His consort lived in the turquoise-colored lake below. Mount Kulha also figures in the story of Gesar of Ling, a famous hero who lived in the thirteenth century, the King Arthur of Tibet who also defended the faith against the unbelievers. The top of the mountain is always under snow and is known as "the crystal tent of Kulha." Just before reaching the top one comes to a large cave, the floor of which is a sheet of solid ice; Akong Tulku, who had climbed up to it, told me that under the ice he had seen huge bones, some of which appeared to be human, but were so large that they could not have belonged to any recent man.

Four nunneries had been established at the four corners of the mountain, being associated with the monastery of Drölma Lhakhang, whose monks could only enter them on particular ceremonial occasions. The nuns led more austere lives than the monks; they spent much time in meditation and did a great deal for the lay population when sick or in trouble. I was very impressed by the spirituality of these women. The nunnery at the west corner of Mount Kulha looked out over the turquoise lake. Near the nunnery at the north corner there was a hermitage which was exclusively used for seven-week periods of meditation on *bardo*, the state experienced at the moment of death and just afterward.

After I had been at Drölma Lhakhang for a few days, I was asked to give the rite of empowerment (wangkur) on the *Treasury of the Mine of Precious Teaching* (Rinchen Terdzö), which I had received from Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen; an immense task, as it lasts for six months. I needed a few days before accepting the invitation, for though I had received permission from my guru to impart this teaching, I was still only fourteen, and my tutor and Karma Norsang, who was my chief adviser, said that I must be quite sure whether or not I could really give the complete wangkur, as any failure would be serious. More and more people were arriving at Drölma Lhakhang, hoping to attend the wangkur, so I had to make a decision. I spent several days in devotional meditation in order to know what I should do; finally I asked Karma Norsang to inform the monastery that I was prepared to undertake the task.

Arrangements were immediately put in hand to prepare for the wangkur. It took a fortnight or so to make all the *tormas*, that is to say conical cakes decorated with disks of sculptured butter that call for great artistry; each shape and pattern has its own symbolism. I appointed a monk to

make a list of all those who wished to attend, asking them if they were prepared really to put into practice the teaching they would receive.

To begin with Karma Norsang gave a ritual recitation of the *kalung* (which means "authorization") on the sixty volumes of the Rinchen Terdzö and I followed to give the wangkur (empowerment rite).

The following timetable shows how the days were arranged.

2:30 A.M.	Karma Norsang gave the kalung.
4:30 A.M.	I prepared my teaching of the wangkur.
6:45 A.M.	Breakfast for all.
8:00 A.M.	I gave the wangkur.
10:00 A.M.	Karma Norsang gave the kalung, and during this time I prepared my teaching.
11:00 A.M.	I gave the wangkur.
12:00 noon	Midday meal for all.
1:10 P.M.	Karma Norsang gave the kalung, while I prepared my teaching.
3:00 P.M.	I gave the wangkur.
5:00 P.M.	Karma Norsang gave the kalung, while I prepared my teaching.
6:00 P.M.	I gave the wangkur.
8:00 P.M.	Finish.
8:30 P.M.	Evening devotions.

It was hard work for everyone; however, all went well. My tutor and monks said they were proud of the achievement of one so young. They told me that I must now start seriously on my work as a guru, but I myself felt that I was not yet sufficiently qualified: I had many misgivings and needed my own guru to elucidate a number of points; moreover, I knew that one must not have too great a conceit of oneself—here was another danger. I explained my position clearly to Akong Tulku and the senior lamas, saying that even if I had been able to give the wangkur and to perform the traditional rites, I was not sufficiently mature to give lectures or personal teaching on meditation; however, I promised that I would do all I could to qualify myself in the future.

After that, we traveled farther afield visiting other monasteries. The abbot of Yak asked me if at a later date I would give the wangkur of the *Treasury of the Mine of Precious Teaching* again. Turning homeward, we

again stopped at Drölma Lhakhang; the secretary and senior lamas there wanted me to undertake to be Akong Tulku's guru, but I told them that he must go and study at Sechen, for I was certain that my knowledge was still too incomplete and that he should be taught by Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche; after all, Akong and I were boys of the same age.

Winter was now coming on and on the day of our departure snow fell in enormous flakes; as there were no trees the whole place was under a sheet of white and it was bitterly cold. There is even a proverb about that part of Tibet—"the coldness of this land will stop tea from pouring"—but in spite of the weather all the monks accompanied us part of the way as a token of good-bye. They were all so friendly that this was one of the most memorable farewells I had ever experienced. Akong Tulku and I had become great friends and he was sad at our parting, but I told him we would meet again very soon at my guru's monastery. I said, "It is inconsistent that I who have not finished my own studies and am not fully qualified to teach should be asked to be your guru; you must go to Jamgön Kongtrül." Akong Rinpoche and his monks escorted us for three miles as far as the lake and then we separated.

The people around had heard about me while I was at Drölma Lhakhang and I received many invitations to visit their local monasteries on my return journey; unfortunately I was not able to accept them. The only place I really wanted to make sure of visiting was the monastery of Karma, the third in importance in the Karma Kagyü school, and we made our way toward it.

The whole area around the monastery, known as Karma Geru, is famous for its art. Since early in the fifteenth century its artists have worked all over Tibet and are known as the Gardri school. All the villagers earn their living by painting. I visited the village of Pating, whose headman was considered to be the leading artist of the area; at his home I found him painting scrolls (thangkas) and at the same time he was teaching other young artists, while his studio was crowded with pictures of all sizes, in different stages of completion. His pupils were also taught to work in clay, how to make their own brushes, to prepare their own canvasses, and mix their colors. His own work was so lovely that it used to be said, "the thangkas that Gönpo Dorje paints do not need to be blessed."

All the houses belonging to the villagers contained wonderful paintings and carvings, and their shrine rooms were in the same style as those of the monasteries. The headman's house was particularly beautiful as it

held the works of many generations of his family, the early ones being the most perfect. The walls were painted with historical or mythical designs, the scrolls were all of religious subjects, and the pillars and ceilings showed decorative designs of birds and flowers which are characteristic of the Gardri school.

On the opposite side of the river the people specialized in goldsmith and silversmith work, particularly in smelting and casting these precious metals. All this was most interesting and, since the villagers were so skilled, I expected the monastery to be even more fascinating artistically.

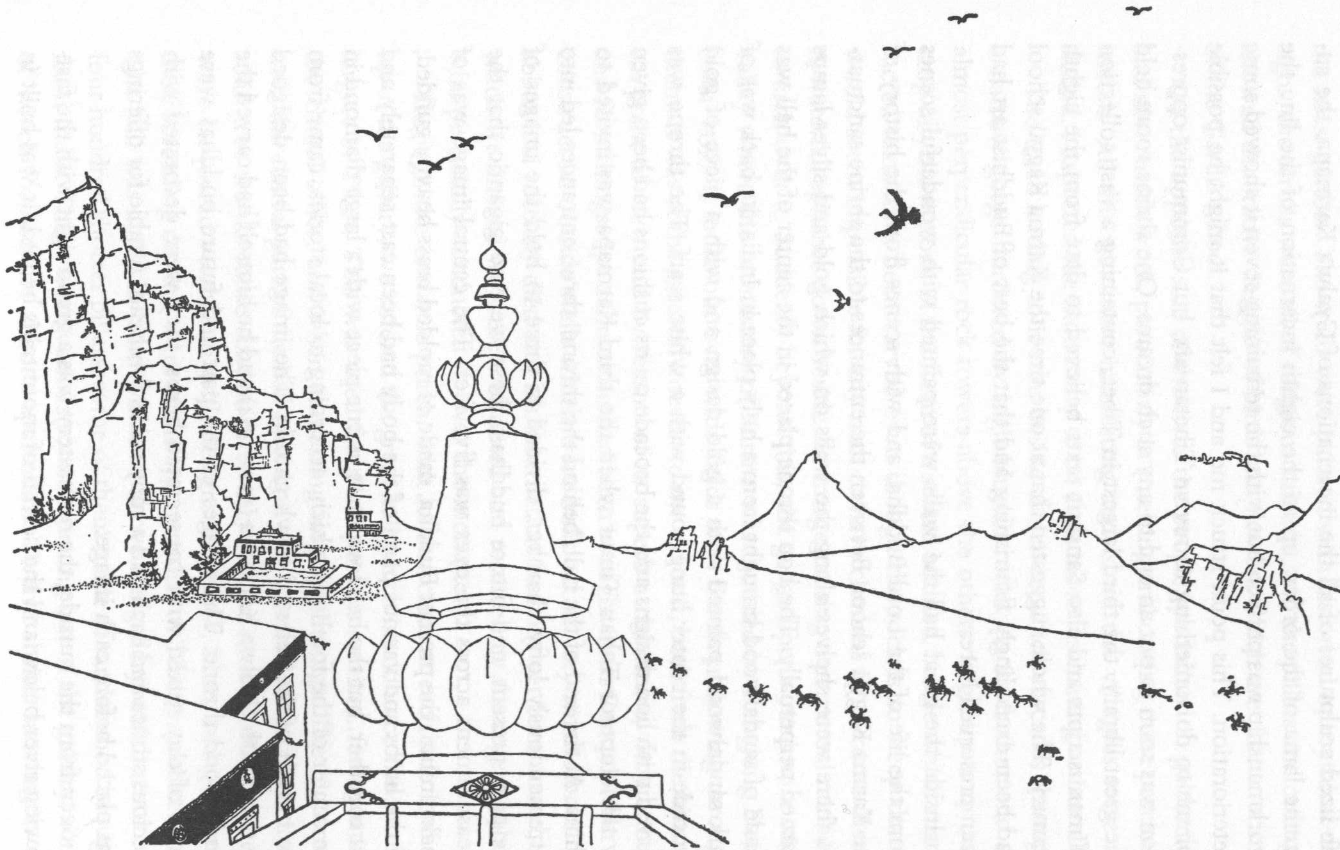
The track leading to it runs beside the river which cascades through a narrow gorge bordered by high blueish rocks. At its farther end an almost perpendicular rock towers above the others. High up is an outcrop of yellow stone in the form of a seated buddha, beside which many sacred texts have been carved even though the rock is so steep that it would seem impossible for any man to have climbed up to carve them. A waterfall splashes down beside the image causing a perpetual rainbow to arch over it. Suddenly beyond this, the gorge opens out into a wide valley where the monastery of Karma was founded by Rangjung Dorje (1284–1339). It looks out over wide fields with the river flowing through them. It was of the greatest interest to me to see it, both from the historical point of view and by reason of its superb architecture, decorations, and furnishings. Special masons had been brought from Central Tibet to construct its outside walls which were built out of very small stones. Its abbot had recently died and his incarnation had not yet been found, so when we arrived we were welcomed and received by the regent abbot, who personally conducted us over the monastery.

Through the entrance porch, with its staircases at each side leading up to the gallery, we entered the great hall which is said to be the second largest in Tibet. This was used for all important services, for chanting the choral office, and when addressing large gatherings. The high roof over the central part of the hall rested on one hundred pillars made from solid tree trunks some sixteen to twenty feet in circumference. These were lacquered vermillion with designs in yellow, blue, and gold, and their spreading capitals were of the type peculiar to Tibetan architecture. The hall was dimly lit from windows above the gallery which rested on four hundred shorter pillars, some of them made of sandalwood brought from India. There were various rooms opening out of the gallery, some of which formed the abbot's apartment. Twelve shrine sanctuaries off

the central hall were used for devotions and in one of them there were life-sized sculptures of all the incarnations of Gyalwa Karmapa, the supreme lama of the order; up to the eighth incarnation of the line the workmanship was perfect, but with the remaining seven it showed some deterioration. This point struck me and I felt that it might be possible for me to do something to revive Tibetan art, but Communist oppression was soon to put an end to any such dreams. One shrine room held the great library, the third largest in Tibet, containing a vast collection of manuscripts and also Sanskrit texts believed to date from the eighth century. The whole suggested that at one time the Karma Kagyü school had been exceedingly flourishing and that the best of Buddhist art had been preserved here.

Inside the great hall the walls were painted with wonderful scenes from the life of the Lord Buddha, and with scenes from the history of the Karma Kagyü school. Between the entrances to the shrine sanctuaries there were shelves along the walls on which gold and silver lamps burned perpetually. The lion throne placed in the center of the hall was made of sandalwood brought from a holy place in India; its back was of dark sandalwood painted with a gold design and with a piece of gold brocade in the center hung round with a white scarf. The throne was carved with lion designs and the brocade on its cushions had been given by the emperor Tohan Timur when the third Karmapa was invited to China. At the end of the hall, behind the throne, three entrances led into a tremendously lofty chamber, divided in three to hold the images of the past, present, and future buddhas; these were so gigantic that the measurement across the eyes was five feet. The central image was of Shakyamuni, the present Buddha, made of molded brass heavily guilded; all the limbs and various parts of the body had been cast separately and put together, but the head was cast in one piece with a large diamond in the center of the forehead which, according to local stories, came from the mouth of the celestial hawk garuda. The image had been designed by the eighth Gyalwa Karmapa (1507–1554) and he himself had carved the sandalwood throne. The images of the past and future buddhas were made of clay mixed with consecrated herbs; they were decorated with precious stones and each had a ruby on its forehead. A table for offerings was placed before each image.

Seen from the outside, the monastery was a grand sight with the fast-flowing river below and the screen of mountains behind. It was built in



The serto (emblem of dignity) on a monastery roof.

three tiers; the uppermost roof over the high chamber of the three buddha images was gilt surmounted by a golden *serto,* a crest ornament denoting dignity, largely used in Tibet over monasteries, houses, and even placed on horses' heads for riders of rank; golden chains hung with small bells ran from the serto to the top of the roof which also bore larger bells at each corner. The roof of the large hall spread out below, again with bells at its corners, and below it a third roof covered the gallery rooms and the cloisters outside the shrines; this also carried bells and carved wooden lions jutted out from the stone walls below them. The two lower roofs were not gilded, but above the gallery rooms there was a row of carved gilt medallions. The cloisters contained eight buddha images and four stupas ten feet high, made of precious metals and placed under gilt canopies. All these had been brought from India in former times; three of the stupas came from Nalanda, one of the most famous Buddhist monastic universities in that country.

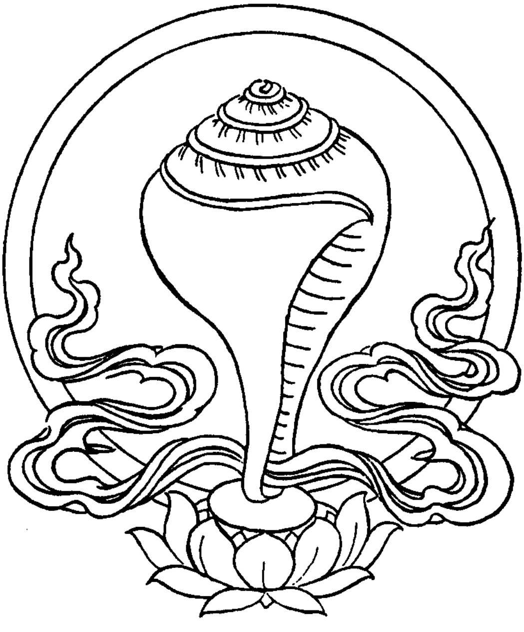
The monastery of Karma was a wonderful example of the artistry of the incarnation of Gyalwa Karmapa and especially of the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth of the line; these lamas were experts in carving, sculpture, painting, and embroidery and in smelting and casting precious metals. Karma was a unique example of the beauty of the traditional art of Tibet. It was also at the time when these lamas lived that there was a renaissance of spiritual teaching all over Tibet to which they made a valuable contribution; their writings contained important teaching to the effect that the metaphysical and the contemplative ways must be brought together.

On the hill opposite the monastery a little retreat had been built, approached by a winding path, with beside it a cluster of tamarisk bushes disposed in the form of the letter *ka* for "Karma."

When I left Karma Monastery many invitations came which I could not accept because of the special devotions always held at Surmang during the last twelve days of each year. This was considered to be an occasion of great importance, but I had not been able to take part in it since I was eleven, having always been away at that particular time. It was the celebration of the buddha-mandala known as the wheel of supreme bliss (*khorlo demchok;* Skt. *chakrasamvara*), and it was combined with a rite of the guardian divinity Gönpo Chakshipa (Four-Armed Protector). These rites included meditation and chanting accompanied by drums and cymbals; wind instruments joined in at the start and end of the chants. The

monks had to arrange that there should be no lapse of attendance during the day or night and none of them could expect more than four hours' sleep. This religious ceremony at the end of each year was intended to dispel evil and to build up new spiritual strength for the year about to begin. I had only been able to attend it three times before, and the monks rejoiced that I could be with them once more. I was so young the first time that I was only allowed to be a spectator, and then only during the day; on the other two occasions, when I had taken part in the whole rite, I had found it very long and tiring, but this year, although I was not yet fifteen, I could both understand and enjoy it.

When this rite was over, I went to spend the New Year with the hermits at Dorje Khyung Dzong away from the bustle of the monastery, after which I was eagerly looking forward to being able to return to my studies at Sechen.



The conch shell of dharma.

EIGHT

A Many-Sided Training

THIS WAS THE YEAR 1954, and when I returned to Surmang I found that great changes had taken place everywhere. The Chinese had opened shops in all the larger towns, selling cloth, crockery, blue Chinese overalls, and much else besides. In my monastery, some of the monks were wearing new robes of a slightly different style, no longer handwoven, but machine made. In the villages the women were buying modern perfumes and other exotic luxuries. My secretary had been appointed a member of the municipality under the Communists. There had been gifts of magazines such as the *People's Pictorial,* and our monks had been given posters with Communist slogans and asked to put them on the walls of the monastery; this they had very properly refused to do. Early in 1953 a Chinese official came to Jyekundo, the large trading town which the Chinese had established as the district capital. Though he had seen me before, he now wanted to ask what I thought of the Communist regime. He presented me with a roll of orange brocade and a large picture of Mao Tse-tung, and through an interpreter he described Peking, how it was the largest city in the world and what exciting things were happening there all the time. He said, "The late emperor's palace is so large it takes twenty-four hours to walk round it. I cannot explain these wonderful things, you must come and see them for yourself; the People's Government invites you." My senior lamas were so uneasy, they advised me not to reply. These Communists officials appeared to me as quite a different sort of human being, not only in their costumes, but in

their whole behavior; their smiles had a significance different from the smiles of Tibetans. I could not understand it at all.

Even so, when I was shown a map of the world in one of the magazines, I longed to know what sort of lives other people led. Hitherto, Europeans had only traveled by the trade routes, or to Lhasa, and they were few and far between; outside the district towns no one had ever set eyes on one. When I was with my guru at Sechen, I had wanted to learn other languages and had begun with the Amdo dialect which has a different pronunciation and uses words that are elsewhere obsolete; now I wanted to learn more, and hoped one day to become familiar with the European language and lettering.

However, other studies lay ahead of me; Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche and the senior lamas thought it was now time for me to learn religious ceremonial dancing. According to monastic rules, secular dancing is not permitted, but the Buddhist dancing is a spiritual exercise in awareness. The Lord Buddha is portrayed in sculpture and painting making different gestures (*mudras*), each of which has its own special significance. And so it is with our dancing; each step and each movement of the hands, arms, and head has its own symbolic meaning and brings an increase of understanding both to dancers and spectators. This is seldom understood in the West where this deeply religious art is still at times miscalled "devil dancing." Nothing could be more ill-founded. These dances have no connection with magic and still less with sorcery, for they originally came from Buddhist India and embody the methods of different spiritual masters.

The form that I was to learn came through Naropa, the "spiritual grandfather" of Milarepa, and expresses the ascent from the level of a beginner to final realization. It is called the great gathering (*tsokchen*) and is based on the wheel of supreme bliss (khorlo demchok) which is a mandala of the sambhogakaya or "fruition body of buddhahood." This dance is a specialty of Surmang.

When the main assembly hall of the Varshika Vihara was not being used for other purposes, the religious dancing was rehearsed there, since this house lay farther up the slope and at some distance from other monastery buildings so that the noise of the dancing could not be heard. The venerable Lhapten, who was the *dorje-loppön* (master of rites), was our instructor; he rejoiced in being able to hand on his great knowledge, for

he was extremely expert and although about sixty-five he was still a very good dancer.

It was all a great change; in the monastery my work had all been sedentary, now it was all movement; thirty-five of us had at first to practice with the hand drum. Afterward, when I was in India, I found the identical instrument in old Indian paintings in a museum, and this proved to me that its use originated there. This work with the drum was, in fact, more difficult than the actual dancing, for the arm has to be held up at full stretch for over an hour at a time, then as the drum is twisted in the hand, the two weights attached to long cords rap on the vellum. To do this properly is far from easy and most tiring to start with. The drum is held in the right hand and symbolizes compassion, while the bell in the left hand symbolizes voidness of ultimate content. We practiced in this way daily from morning till evening with only an hour's break. In the evening we had to memorize the fundamental principles of the dancing and to learn the chants that go with it.

My tutor, Apho Karma, helped me on this course; he was very knowledgeable about these things though hardly a good dancer himself, but he gave me private instruction, for he was anxious for me to excel. He expressed the thought that I should have some spare time to rest in order to offset all this physical exertion and did his best to help by giving me massage; he also began to worry about my health, since at the start I suffered a good deal through my muscles being in such poor condition; but in a month's time I grew stronger. By then we were practicing other movements and I could work nearly all day long without getting tired. Naturally I was not one of the better pupils, for the other monks had started in good condition; I knew that I lagged behind them, though they and our teacher always tried to be encouraging. Still I enjoyed it very much, and the difficulties reminded me of the time when I practiced prostration under Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche.

The course went on for three and a half months without interruption, for there was a great deal to learn. The dancing had 360 different themes symbolic of the number of days in the year, and of the same number of worldly thoughts that must be transformed into the 360 forms of wisdom.

At the end we had a dress rehearsal and were watched by an unofficial audience. We appeared in our best robes and I had to lead the dance which was most embarrassing, for I knew that some of the others were

better than I. Alas, in their kindness the audience made no comment, but this made me even more aware that I really needed criticism, and I realized how grateful I must be to my tutor for treating me objectively and never hesitating to correct me.

After three months at the Varshika Vihara, I had to decide whether to go back to Sechen or to stay on for further dancing lessons. I chose to go to my guru without delay for, as I told my secretary, it was already the beginning of summer, and if I did not leave at once, the river Dri-chu might again be in spate and difficult to cross.

As we were preparing to start we learned that His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other senior lamas had been invited to visit China. Some of my monks were very upset, fearing that the Chinese would not allow His Holiness to return to Tibet; others, however, felt that his visit might help, for he would surely make a good impression on the Communists.

Apho Karma did not want to come with me, saying that he felt old and exhausted and that at Sechen he could no longer help me for I would be under my own guru. I was very sad to leave him behind for he had done so much for me with his ready advice and deep understanding. Now he reminded me that I could not hide behind a tutor all my life, adding, "On this journey you can make the experiment of relying on your own judgment, but once at Sechen, you will be under Jamgön Kongtrül; everything will be in his hands and you will not have to worry about anything."

Many monks and friends came to bid us farewell and my table was piled with scarves offered in token of good wishes. I said good-bye to Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche, and we set off escorted by our many friends for the first stage of our journey. This time we took a different route, through the most beautiful country I had ever seen. For three days among the high mountains we did not see a single human being, though there were all sorts of animals such as foxes, muskrats, and deer, while at night we had to put a guard on our pack animals to protect them from brown bears. The whole countryside was ablaze with flowers.

On our arrival at Sechen, I found that Jamgön Kongtrül was no longer at his own residence, but was living in the seminary. We learned that the latter had been enlarged and that there were many more monks and tulkus present. He was not expecting me, but expressed delight at my arrival. Many old friends were still there and all told me that this

time I must really complete my studies. My guru was giving a course of lectures on *The Seven Treasuries,* the works of Longchen Rabjampa, a great teacher of the Nyingma school. He said that it was a most auspicious moment for me to join them and that the teaching would be his spiritual gift of welcome: He would give me personal instruction on the previous parts that I had missed.

Visitors were continually coming for the teaching, who camped in tents all round the seminary. The atmosphere was quite different to Surmang; I found it so happy and peaceful in spite of the crowds and the noise, everyone was intent on gaining further spiritual knowledge; we all felt how the monks at Sechen had a particular charm, from those who did the menial tasks, upward, it was like a big happy family.

Academically I had less work to do here and this gave me more time for meditation.

A fortnight later, the course was finished and the summer vacation began. As Jamgön Kongtrül was going back to his residence he advised me to travel with my monks to visit the famous Khyentse Rinpoche at Dzongsar Monastery, four days' journey away in the valley of the Drichu. Four of the professors (khenpos) accompanied us and we set off southward. On the third day we stopped at Manikengo as we had been told the story of a very saintly man who had died there the previous year. We went to the house where he had lived, and met his son and his wife who recounted the miracle that had occurred at the old man's death.

In his lifetime he had erected a group of "mani stones" on which he had carved a great number of mantras and sutras and he had also set up a *chöten* (stupa) among them.

In his youth he had been a servant with a wealthy family, but in middle age he left his employment to receive meditational instruction in a monastery. Though he had to work for his living by day, he spent most of his nights in contemplation, only allowing himself two to three hours' sleep. His compassion was so great that he always helped everyone in need, and opened his house at all times to pilgrims and the very poor. While carrying out his daily work he used to practice meditation in his own way, though his son who was a monk told him that he should carry out more formal spiritual exercises, but this he could not accept. Though he had hitherto always been in good health, three years before his death he fell ill and his family began to be very worried, yet he himself

appeared to become increasingly happy. He composed and sang his own songs of praise instead of traditional Buddhist chants. As his illness became more and more serious, lamas and doctors were called in, with his son telling him that he must now remember all the teaching that he had received, at which he smiled, saying, "I have forgotten it all, and anyway there is nothing to remember; everything is illusion, yet I am confident that all is well." Just before his death the old man said, "When I die you must not move my body for a week; this is all that I desire."

They wrapped his dead body in old clothes and called in lamas and monks to recite and chant. The body was carried into a small room, little bigger than a cupboard and it was noted that though the old man had been tall the body appeared to have become smaller; at the same time a rainbow was seen over the house. On the sixth day on looking into the room the family saw it had grown still smaller. A funeral service was arranged for the morning of the eighth day and men came to take the body to the cemetery; when they undid the coverings there was nothing inside except nails and hair. The villagers were astounded, for it would have been impossible for anyone to have come into the room, the door was always kept locked, and the window of the little resting place was much too small.

The family reported the event to the authorities and also went to ask Khyentse Rinpoche about the meaning of it. He told them that such a happening had been reported several times in the past and that the body of the saintly man had been absorbed into the Light. They showed me the nails and the hair and the small room where they had kept the body. We had heard of such things happening, but never at firsthand, so we went round the village to ask for further information. Everyone had seen the rainbow and knew that the body had disappeared. This village was on the main route from China to Lhasa and the people told me that the previous year when the Chinese heard about it they were furious and said the story must not be talked about.

The following day we reached the monastery of Dzongsar which belonged to the Sakya school. The present Khyentse Rinpoche had been brought up there; his guru had been Situ of Kathok Monastery, the disciple of the renowned teacher the great Khyentse Rinpoche whose path the present Khyentse had followed.

On our arrival we found there were more visitors than residents; they had come from all the different Buddhist schools of Tibet, for the semi-

nary specialized in a great variety of teachings. We were given accommodation in the monastery and made an appointment to be received by Khyentse Rinpoche on the following day. Our party went together for a formal introduction, exchanging the traditional scarves, etc., after which, the lama talked to me alone. His room had been left exactly as it was in the time of the great Khyentse and seemed still to exude the power of his spirituality. Khyentse came down from his throne and sat on a cushion in front of me with a welcoming smile. There was a sense of peace, happiness, and warmth all around him, but there was also a sense of awe, his words were so profound. He said that he was always glad to meet a disciple of Jamgön Kongtrül and particularly one who is the incarnation of the tenth Trungpa Tulku who had also been one of his own teachers; he added, "You and I are the sons of the same spiritual father." He felt that he had no further teaching to give me since I had studied under so great a master already, but at my request he agreed to perform the empowerment rite of kalachakra (the wheel of time) for our party and would also instruct me privately. Although I was only there for a month, I learned a great deal and a deep understanding grew between us. Khyentse Rinpoche said to me, "You must look after and guide yourself, as in the future there will be no further teachers. A new era has begun in which the pure doctrine of the Lord Buddha lies in the hands of individuals; each one is separately responsible, for I do not think that we can carry on in the way we have done up till now. We can no longer rely on groups and communities. The situation is very serious, many of us are old, and perhaps it is young people like you, the new generation, who shall bear the burden."

While we were at Dzongsar, we had a strange experience. Knowing that the monastery was the center for a great many visitors, lamas, scholars, and devotees, the Communists came with a propaganda film complete with its own batteries to give us a show. It covered their activities in Tibet from 1949 to 1953, and showed how much they had accomplished there with their so-called improvements, such as roads, schools, and hospitals, and how the Red Army had been warmly welcomed by the Tibetans. Since there was no public hall in which they could show the film, they made use of one of the sacred temples. Khyentse Rinpoche was forced to be present, for if he were there everyone else would have to attend: This was the first time I had seen a film.

The morning of our departure was a sad one, especially with those

last words from Khyentse Rinpoche uppermost in my mind. I asked him to promise that we would meet again and that I would be given more time to study under him. His presence seemed to be with me for many miles of the journey.

During the interval, before the start of the new term at Sechen, I decided to spend all my time in meditation under my guru. Tulku Aten who was still with me as my advisor, now told me that before we left Surmang the authorities had said that I must not remain away for too long as I was needed in the monasteries, so I should finish my studies as quickly as possible. I consulted my guru who advised me to stay at Sechen for a little longer as I needed further instruction in meditation and Tulku Aten went back to Surmang to tell them how matters stood. I was now left with Lama Pega as my attendant and one Tsering, who like myself was anxious to have further instruction in meditation.

This was the time of year when young monks, particularly those from distant monasteries, went out with their begging bowls to collect food for the winter; those who belonged to Sechen were usually supported by local people. Since, however, many of the monks at Sechen were disciples of my previous incarnation, they looked after me and I accepted their help as it was important for me to study.

When the new term began we had to go on with our work from where we had left off; we started with the *abhidharma*, the metaphysical portion of the old Buddhist canon, and continued with *pratimoksha* which deals with monastic rules; we had also to study rhetoric and logic, though not so extensively as in some other schools. All the teaching was given orally, and we only made a few notes at the time for our own use.

The master encouraged me to make a comparative study of the different schools, and would explain their meeting points. He listened to my criticisms, but would say, "It is no use just having theories, you must reflect about the meaning: You must not accept anything just because it is given as the teaching of Buddha, but always examine it for yourself. You must follow the middle way; if a statement is found in the scriptures, it rests with you to find out what it really means in order to have true faith. Knowledge must be tested in the same way as gold; first refined, then beaten and made smooth till it becomes the right color and shows that it is pure gold."

I was delighted when Akong Tulku arrived at Sechen for the New Year celebrations; we had become fast friends when I visited Drölma

Lhakhang and gave the rite of the *Treasury of the Mine of Precious Teaching*: I had then done all I could to persuade him to come to Sechen to receive instruction from Jamgön Kongtrül, and I wanted him to experience the wonderful atmosphere there. His party had had an extremely difficult journey, for the whole country was under ice and snow. Five Drölma Lhakhang monks had accompanied him, but soon returned to their monastery and only his tutor remained with him.



The vase of the elixir of immortality.

NINE

The Dalai Lama's Visit

On his return journey in 1955, after a year's visit to China, the Dalai Lama wanted to travel by way of East Tibet in order to be able to meet his people there; but unfortunately he was delayed by earthquakes that had caused damage to some of the northern roads, and he was forced to change his plans for it was only possible to visit those places that could be reached by car, so he delegated three high-ranking lamas to represent him elsewhere. These were his junior tutor Trijang Rinpoche, Chung Rinpoche, and Gyalwa Karmapa; the latter was to take his place at Palpung Monastery. I received a letter from Gyalwa Karmapa just before the end of the Sechen term, informing me of these plans and telling me to come to Palpung where a council was to be held to decide on the arrangements to be made to receive the Dalai Lama's message: All the abbots of the Kagyü school were expected to attend it. After notifying Surmang I started off with Akong Tulku, my two Surmang monks, and a monk from Sechen who fortunately had a mule. Both Akong and I had already sent our horses back to our monasteries and though the abbots at Sechen offered to lend us theirs as well as some tents, I thought that we should do the journey on foot, while our baggage could be carried on the mule. Traveling proved difficult, for the spring snow was very soft and heavy; there was no wind and we suffered a good deal from snow blindness.

When we reached Palpung we found that my bursar and Apho Karma, whom I had not seen for some time, together with many other

senior lamas had already arrived. They were surprised that our party had traveled on foot.

Gyalwa Karmapa, as the representative of the Dalai Lama, was accompanied by Chinese and Tibetan officials besides having a Chinese bodyguard; we had little time to change from our travel-stained clothes into our brocade robes to be ready to pay our respects to him. He was very friendly and told me that he had been waiting for me. We had tea together, when he told me how relieved he was to be back in Tibet; he said that the Chinese had appeared friendly, but that life in China seemed to be rather superficial. He was interested to hear about my studies.

The following day Gyalwa Karmapa gave the Dalai Lama's message to the assembly, saying:

> His Holiness deeply regrets that he has not been able to accept the invitation from the Kagyüpas himself. He asks people to understand the present situation in Tibet and how important it is for everyone to keep to their religious institutions. A great responsibility rests upon the leaders who must help both the monastic and the lay population. Everyone should be cooperative and remember that all are brothers.

Then Gyalwa Karmapa went on to tell us about the visit to China. They had been treated very hospitably: The orderliness and the material advances in the country had been brought to their notice, but he said nothing about the religious and personal freedom of the people.

We could understand that the Dalai Lama and his party were not free to voice their own opinions. Between the lines, one could realize what conditions were really like in China, and what might happen in Tibet. The whole program, as well as the Dalai Lama's itinerary, was obviously being controlled by the Communists.

The abbot of Palpung Monastery, Tai Situ Rinpoche, who was second in importance in the Karma Kagyü school, had died some years before and no reincarnation had been found. Up till then Gyalwa Karmapa had been unable to give any indication where to look. The monastic committee now renewed the hope that the time had come for a vision and that Gyalwa Karmapa might perform the enthronement ceremony while he was still at Palpung. But the latter felt very uncertain about it; he had been much disturbed since his visit to China. He meditated for three

days and on the fourth he had a vision. He called the regent abbot and the secretary and asked them to arrange for the enthronement at once, for he could now tell them where the incarnation had taken place. Everyone rejoiced and started immediately to make the preparations.

That same afternoon they went back to him for his final directions. He told them to go the following morning to a place where they would find the incarnation and gave them the full names of the parents, for he was in no doubt; all three must immediately be brought to Palpung. The monastery sent out invitations to attend the ceremony to the king of Derge, to lamas of neighboring monasteries, and to important laymen in the district.

The king arrived in great state with thirty-five counselors and three hundred other people in his suite. His procession was led by a row of monk musicians, with other monks who were waving censers. The king wore a shirt of lemon-colored brocade under a gold brocade coat, with pantaloons of white silk tucked into long boots; his jeweled sword in a carved gold scabbard hung from his belt. He had a gold amulet box slung across his chest; his hat was of gold brocade with red tassels round the crown and a large diamond on the top. His four senior ministers wore the same sort of costume, but of deep yellow brocade; the other ministers were in crimson brocade; all wore rubies on their hats. The rest of the suite followed in ordinary festival clothes. All the party rode on horses bedecked with gay trappings.

The enthronement ceremony was held in the large assembly hall; the whole place, including the pillars, was decorated with gold brocade hangings as well as beautiful thangkas depicting the life of the Buddha and the line of the Kagyü school. The senior lamas were in their gold brocade *töngas* (waistcoats) under maroon robes and cloaks with golden stoles at the back. Gyalwa Karmapa's throne at the right and the abbot's throne on the left, each with five cushions, were at the end of the hall, while the tulkus sat in rows leading up to them. Each throne had a number of cushions on it which varied according to the standing of the particular tulku, either four, three, two, or a single one on the floor; all were covered in gold brocade: I was given four cushions. The king sat behind us on five cushions nearest to Gyalwa Karmapa's throne, with his ministers and the neighboring laity below him. The rest of the monks were on low benches covered with rugs. Against the wall on the opposite side of the king an elaborate altar had been erected.

Gyalwa Karmapa conducted the ceremony of enthronement; scarves and gifts were piled on the table, and a khenpo gave a two-hour talk on the history of Buddhism, also on the history of the monastery, and expressed everyone's gratitude that the incarnation had been found. The following day a party was arranged for the king, and invitations were sent to particular lamas. For several weeks afterward offerings were placed before the altar, including thousands of butter lamps, sacrificial cakes (tormas), flowers, and incense. In return the king gave a dinner to the regent abbot and senior monks who, when he left, accompanied him some distance on his journey. In Tibet this is always a mark of respect.

After the enthronement, a message was received from the Dalai Lama to say when he would be arriving in Derge; he would be staying at the king's palace. Gyalwa Karmapa made this announcement to all the lamas present; there was a discussion about how to approach His Holiness and what other arrangements should be made. Particular forms, ceremonies, and rules of costume had to be observed and many gifts, of which there was a prescribed list, had to be offered: A monk had to read from an illuminated script, couched in poetic form, with many flourishes begging the acceptance of the gifts by His Holiness. The first gift had to be a white scarf, followed by a gold image of the Buddha, a scripture, and a model of a stupa, or a bell and dorje, as symbols of long life of the body, speech, and mind; also five rolls of colored cloth and the skins of a tiger, a leopard, a fox, and an otter. The Dalai Lama would also be offered the traditional gifts of a set of robes, gold and silver coins, rolls of brocade, food, horses and cattle, etc., finally another white scarf, for this is auspicious, being the symbol of purity.

On this occasion, Gyalwa Karmapa would officiate at the presentation of all the gifts from Palpung as well as those from the neighboring monasteries and from the important laity of the district; they would all be placed together in the center of the hall in the prescribed order.

At the finish of the council meeting, Gyalwa Karmapa was invited to come for a rest at the summer residence of some of the higher-ranking lamas at Palpung. These private residences were situated about half a mile from the monastery; they were charmingly built, with their own gardens and stables. The Chinese officials and bodyguard, being still with Gyalwa Karmapa, were also able to relax there; they played football in the garden and we were able to talk to them in a most friendly way and even to joke with them. Away from Communist authority, they were

natural and seemed to take an interest in everything. At that time many Tibetans were on excellent terms with the Chinese, as long as the latter were out of sight of the Party members in charge.

While Gyalwa Karmapa was resting we were still able to go to have informal talks and teaching from him and I spoke to him about my idea of enlarging the seminary at Dütsi Tel; he was most encouraging in spite of the Chinese situation. All this month I spent the time usefully by meeting abbots and professors from other monasteries, while in the evenings and early mornings I worked at my own studies. Apho Karma realized that I had learned a lot during the past year and began at last to treat me as an adult.

During the time that Gyalwa Karmapa was away, the committee at Palpung had established a camp near Derge Gönchen, the capital of Derge, for we expected that His Holiness would spend a night with us. This meant a very large camp; five hundred tents were required since, besides those destined for the Dalai Lama and his party, about four hundred others were needed for all the Kagyü lamas who had attended the council meeting. It was necessary to obtain the approval of both Tibetan and Chinese officials for these arrangements. When Gyalwa Karmapa returned to us, we all left for the camp.

The special tent for His Holiness had a separate bedroom and sitting room and was beautifully decorated throughout. Another tent was needed for audiences and this housed the Dalai Lama's throne; there were more tents for committee and cabinet meetings and for the rest of his party. Each tent was of a different size, shape, and design; most of them were lined with white silk adorned with brocade hangings and thangkas. A gold-plated serto (crest ornament), the emblem of dignity, rose over each tent; the tent ropes were black with red ornaments, and the pegs took the form of gilt images of various demigods; flowers had been planted all round and the whole camp looked very welcoming.

The day before His Holiness was expected to reach the king's palace we made ready to go to meet him. First, a procession was organized to escort Gyalwa Karmapa to Derge Gönchen whose monks, belonging to the Sakya school, were to be our hosts. The procession was very colorful; eighty abbots preceded Gyalwa Karmapa and his staff, and he was followed by three hundred monks; everyone was on horseback. The senior lamas wore their maroon robes under long-sleeved yellow brocade riding coats, with vermillion stoles draped across their shoulders; a cord

round the waist and across one shoulder held everything in position, being clasped at the back by a gold amulet case and joined in front with a gold tassel. They wore their summer hats of gold lacquer with round crowns and brims. The horses were gaily caparisoned and carried the ornament of the serto between their ears; their saddles were plated with gold while the flaps were of gold brocade.

As we approached the monastery which lay near the king's principal palace, monks with banners and musical instruments came to escort us along the road, and at the monastery we were welcomed by other musicians on the roof.

The king himself belonged to the Sakya school, so he had invited Phüntsok Photrang Rinpoche, the head of that school, together with his party, to be guests at another of his residences.

The Dalai Lama was due to arrive the following day; he was to stay with the king at the chief palace. When his car was some two miles away the king with Phüntsok Photrang and Gyalwa Karmapa drove out, also in cars, to meet him. He was accompanied by his tutor, and his staff followed in two more cars. Thousands of people were lining the road which was decorated with designs in colored sand and had a white cloth laid upon it for the cars to pass over; they had crowded in from all parts of the district to greet the Dalai Lama, but were very disappointed at seeing so little of him, since the Chinese authorities had insisted that he should travel in a closed car. The king and the two abbots escorted the Dalai Lama's party back to the palace, all going at a very slow pace with a monk walking behind the Dalai Lama's car carrying a ceremonial umbrella. The abbots of both schools stood in rows a short distance from the palace, Sakyapas on the right-hand side and Kagyüpas on the left, but like the country crowds we could hardly see His Holiness shut up, as he was, in the closed car, nor did we see the party alight outside the palace where the king's ministers were waiting on the steps; the king himself, carrying incense sticks, then conducted the Dalai Lama into the palace to the welcoming sound of music.

Next day His Holiness gave a wangkur and a short talk in the great hall of the monastery. He said that our religion should come foremost in our lives to bind us together, but we should try to have a friendly attitude toward the Chinese. We sat in the first row and it was almost unbelievable and extremely moving for us to see His Holiness in our part of Tibet. Despite official pomp and ceremony, the Dalai Lama made

it evident that he had come as a friend to his people, smiling his greeting as he went to his throne escorted by his solemn, formal officials. He made us feel that he really wanted to be among us in East Tibet which he had been unable to visit before. He gave me personally a wider vision, since I now understood what it meant to be the incarnation of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, for this was apparent in the Dalai Lama's serenity and radiance, which one could feel was part of him. We were beginning to lose heart, for the Communists were becoming so powerful; it seemed as if our happy days were coming to an end; however, the presence of His Holiness gave us renewed hope that the spiritual teaching and culture of Tibet could not be entirely swept away. Yet it was sad to see him looking so thin and strained as a result of the heavy burden he had to carry.

While we were at Derge Gönchen we were taken over parts of the palace which was very interesting. It was already old when the great king of Derge, Chögyal Tenpa Tsering, after having conquered the surrounding province, made Derge Gönchen his capital in the eighteenth century. He used to travel incognito all round the districts to see for himself in what condition his people were living and if justice was being properly administered. We were shown the library which he had built. This had its own printing press; the woodblocks for printing the scriptures (the finest of their kind in Tibet) as well as the printed books themselves were stored here. This press was famous all over the country, for there were only two other such establishments in Tibet. The library was considered to be a holy place, even though work was carried on there, for its books were all connected with Buddhist teaching. Chögyal Tenpa Tsering, besides being a good ruler, was himself a notable scholar; he was a devotee of all the schools and his library contained a variety of important works, among them, 108 volumes of translations of sutras (the Kangyur), a number of old and new translations of the Buddhist tantras, and also many volumes of commentary by early Indian Buddhist scholars (the Tengyur), all translated from Sanskrit; the great Tai Situ Chökyi Jungne had corrected most of the proofs for the printers. The celebrated woodcarvers here were known as the Kutsi school.

The king of Derge was still very young and his mother was acting as regent. She gave us an audience and we noticed how pale and thin she looked, for she was always under the strain of dealing with the Chinese

and attending their meetings in addition to her work on state affairs. She was simply dressed in dark blue brocade and wore small gold earrings, with a reliquary round her neck and a turquoise ornament in her hair.

We also met the head of the Sakya school, Phüntsok Photrang Rinpoche, who had been to China with the Dalai Lama. He told us that coming back to Tibet had seemed like a dream. He had felt before he went away that his country had reached a crisis and that the time had come for us all to consider our future more thoughtfully. While he was away he had been quite exhausted, so he said, and it was restful to be back here again, but if he seemed lazy and wished to forget the experience, we others must not imitate him; those who had not suffered the strain of this turmoil might still be able to work out clearly what should be done: It does not matter to what school one belongs, all must work together. Before we left he gave us his blessing.

When we were returning to our camp Gyalwa Karmapa asked Sanggye Nyenpa Rinpoche, an older lama, to take charge of our party, for at that time most of the Kagyü lamas were quite young. We were so lively and friendly among ourselves that everyone who saw us was struck by it.

Back at our camp, we finished our preparations for the Dalai Lama's visit. In the afternoon, however, to our great disappointment we received a message that His Holiness would be unable to stay the night, because the Chinese required him to return to Central Tibet; he could only spend two hours at the camp and take lunch with us. So many people had looked forward for months to this visit that the disappointment was general; it was apparent that His Holiness was prevented from doing as his people wanted, but had to obey the orders of the Communists.

The next day, he arrived in his car and the welcoming ceremony took place as planned. He blessed us by reciting *The Heart Sutra of Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnaparamita-hridaya Sutra)* and took a meal with us at the camp, after which the ceremonial offerings were duly made to him. He returned all the gifts and only kept the scroll on which the list of gifts had been written. He presented the Kagyü order with his own brocade robe and some rolls of hand-woven cloth and left us with the words "My thoughts will always be with you; I am distressed at being unable to stay the night, but I am really happy to have spent these two hours with you." Before leaving, His Holiness performed the hair-cutting ceremony

of primary upasaka for the infant Tai Situ Lama, whom Gyalwa Karmapa had enthroned at Palpung.

While I was at the camp a messenger came from Surmang saying that a senior lama of a neighboring monastery had died and that the monks wanted me to perform the rites. Akong Tulku and my two monks took the baggage back to Sechen, and I started on my way, traveling for the first day in company with Gyalwa Karmapa as far as Kamtho Trukha, where the Chinese had installed a ferry to cross the Dri-chu. Here Gyalwa Karmapa left for Chamdo, where the Dalai Lama was expected. His last words to me were that I must first finish my studies and then improve and enlarge the seminary at Dütsi Tel. He went away at seven o'clock in the morning in rain and mist in a small car provided by the Chinese. It was all so quick that there was no opportunity to say good-bye; he had disappeared in a moment, waving a white scarf from the car. Other lama friends left at the same time in different directions, and I found myself alone with the two Surmang monks. It seemed strangely quiet and peaceful after so much bustle, and we rode on through beautiful wild valleys to our monastery some seven days' journey away.

When I reached Surmang we held a meeting for all the monks and the more important laity of the district; I told them about the Dalai Lama and I gave them his message; but like His Holiness I found myself in the same difficulty, for I could not talk openly, since there were many Chinese officials among us. However, having seen how restricted even the Dalai Lama had to be, I found it easier to impose the necessary restraint upon myself. Indeed, not having an official position, there was little I could do; I wanted, however, to give my people as true a picture of the situation as possible, and some idea of what our future aims might be. I discussed this with my secretary, the senior lamas, and the people's representatives, some of whom had been in contact with the Communists. All had the feelings of loyal Tibetans, but thought we were not in a position to do anything other than to accept the Chinese domination. At that time there was some hope that the jurisdiction of the committee which was going to be formed in Lhasa, ostensibly under the Dalai Lama, would include East Tibet. Unfortunately the Chinese had already divided up the country into separate regions, and our region was assigned to Sining which the Chinese considered to be entirely separate from Tibet proper. They said, "All Tibet belongs to us, especially the

Sining district which is not even Tibet. You are part of China, and it would be entirely inappropriate to combine you with Central Tibet." We ourselves always considered that the people who speak Tibetan and eat roasted barley (tsampa) as their staple food are Tibetans.

Already during the Chinese Nationalist regime of Ma Pu-fang, which preceded the Communist invasion, we had gone through much suffering. Very high taxes had been levied, but at least we had been allowed liberty of religion; now all we could do was to pray and hope that there would be unity in Tibet, under His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

When I was able to leave Surmang, I visited the monastery where the senior lama had died and we held the funeral ceremony. Returning to Dütsi Tel I called a meeting to discuss enlarging the seminary as Gyalwa Karmapa had advised. Our present one was only full in the summer and very few monks attended it in the winter. It was not even a separate establishment; I wanted it to have its own building, as this had been the intention of the tenth Trungpa Tulku. He had wanted this to be undertaken as soon as he had established the five meditation centers on which he had set his heart, saying, "If enemies come and destroy the building, we in fact lose nothing; the worthwhileness of the deed is eternal."

A new seminary would need more ground and many other arrangements would have to be made. I discussed these plans with my secretary and though I asked various people for donations I said I would like to contribute the monastery's share from my personal funds. People were not very enthusiastic, but because of my request they agreed to support the idea. We decided that after my next visit to Sechen, I would bring a khenpo back with me as a permanent head for the seminary.

Soon after this I returned to Sechen; this time Apho Karma, nine other monks, and my little brother, the nine-year-old incarnate Tamchö Tenphel, abbot of the small monastery of Kyere, came with me. At Sechen I was welcomed by my guru and many other friends, all of whom had doubted whether I would return. I found everyone in the monastery in a state of great turmoil. The reason was, so Jamgön Kongtrül told me, that they had received a letter from Khyentse Rinpoche saying that he had left the monastery of Dzongsar for good owing to the probability of the further spread of Chinese Communism; he intended to settle permanently in India and to make pilgrimages to all the holy places; he died later in Sikkim. Everyone was very upset at his departure and Jamgön Kongtrül thought it might be wise to leave as well. The

whole atmosphere of Sechen was disturbed; finally the latter decided to stay on for at least a few more years.

It gave me great comfort that I could continue my studies, for I was now better able to understand and appreciate the teaching; I realized that soon I might have no one to teach me, so the privilege of being in contact with my guru was of greater importance than ever. During the summer vacation I studied with redoubled zest under my great teacher and all but completed my lessons in meditation as well as the course of philosophic studies. My guru told me that I should learn further from his disciple Khenpo Gangshar, one of the six senior professors at Sechen, who was not only immensely learned but was also very advanced spiritually. I thought this meant that I should invite Khenpo Gangshar to help us at the new seminary; but though the friendship between the two monasteries was very close, all this would have to be discussed with the abbots and the monastic committee of Sechen in consultation with Jamgön Kongtrül. With great kindness they finally agreed to let Khenpo Gangshar come to my monastery for an unspecified time. I wanted him to come as soon as possible and it was agreed that he would make the journey in six months' time. This meant, of course, that I could not stay at Sechen much longer. Though my own training in meditation had been completed under Jamgön Kongtrül, I still had to qualify as an instructor in this spiritual art, besides finishing my theoretical studies.

The Sechen authorities asked me to attend the summer celebration of Guru Padmakara's birthday, and this I could not refuse since I expected it would be for the last time. The services would last for ten days under Tulku Rabjam Rinpoche, and Jamgön Kongtrül would also occasionally attend them.

The assembly hall at Sechen was very large and dimly lit. The gold on the wonderful wall paintings and hangings reflected the light of the lamps against the red-lacquered pillars and, following the Mindröling tradition, a particularly fragrant incense was used, which permeated everywhere. The objects on the shrine were extremely delicate and beautifully arranged, and the carved butter ornaments for the sacrificial cakes were real works of art.

On the tenth day of the celebration a religious dance was held: Its theme was the eight aspects of Guru Padmakara, and there were other dances connected with the "wrathful" aspect of the Buddhamandala; these dances were performed by some three hundred monks. The

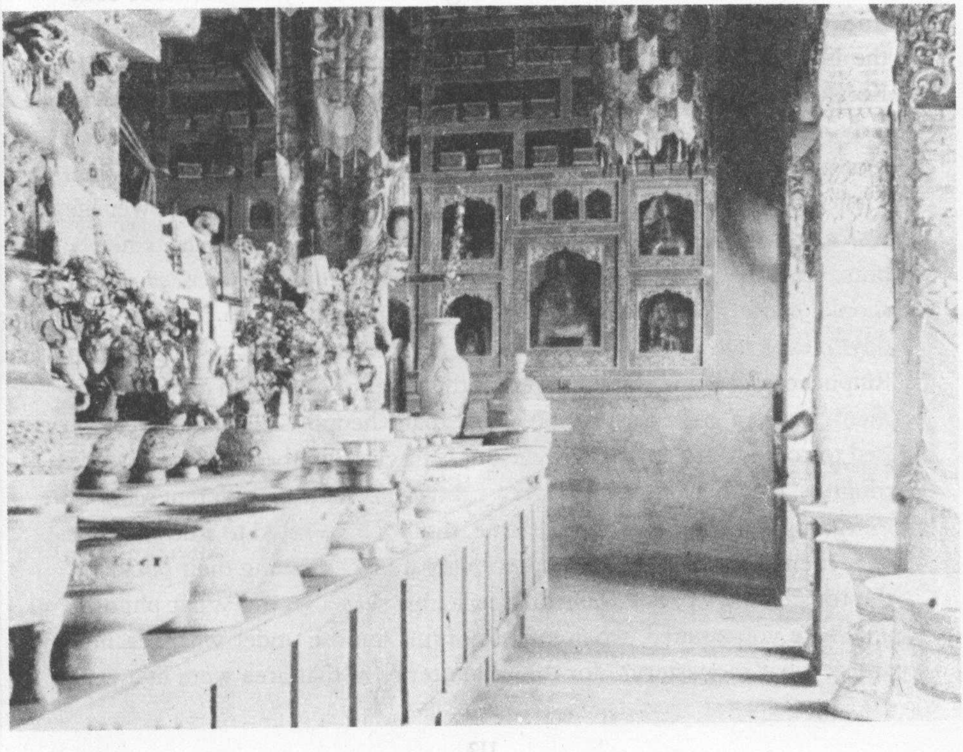


Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.



Khyentse Rinpoche of Dzongsar.

A shrine room. PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.

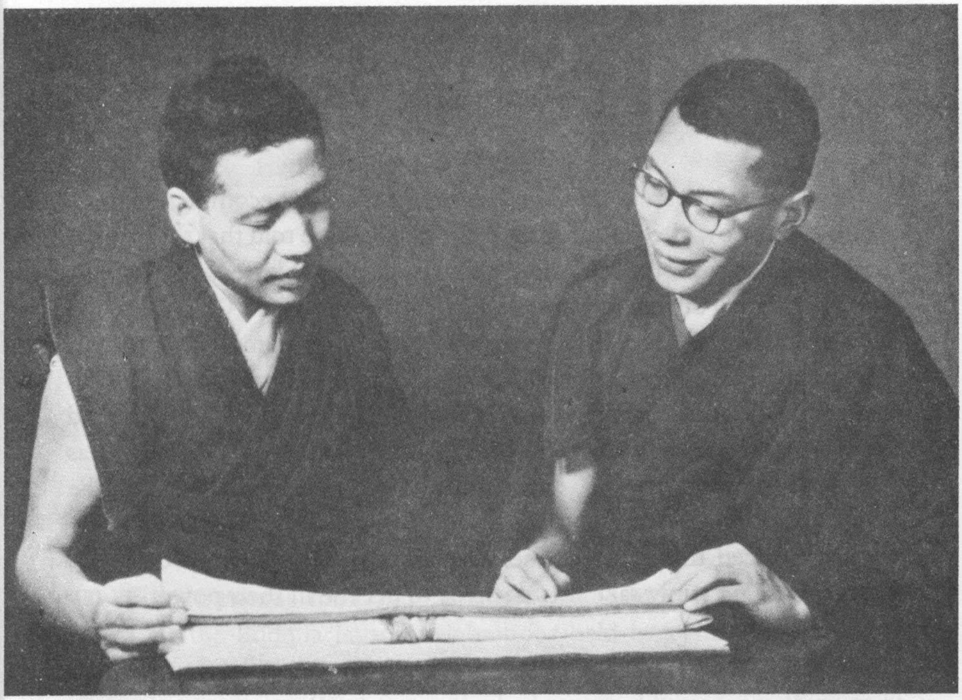


costumes were very old and decorative and thousands of people came to watch. This was the only anniversary at which women were allowed within the precincts of the monastery and they greatly enjoyed this opportunity to visit the beautiful shrines. We ended with a *marme mönlam* (prayer with lamps) and all prayed that we might be eternally united in the dharma.

As I soon had to leave Sechen, my last three weeks were spent with Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche at his residence. He gave me his final instructions, saying, "You have now learned a great deal from me, but you must improve your knowledge. Much comes from one's own experience in teaching, reading, and contemplating. A teacher must not refuse to help others; at the same time he can always learn. This is the way of the bodhisattvas, who while they helped others, gained further enlightenment themselves. One must be wholely aware of all that one does; for in teaching, however expertly, if one's own understanding be insufficient, there is danger of simply using words regardless of their spiritual meaning; therefore you must still remember that you yourself will continue to be a pupil on the way."

A memorable farewell dinner was given for me by the monastic committee of Sechen, for though, fundamentally, the monastery belonged to the Nyingma school, there was a close affiliation to the Kagyü. Jamgön Kongtrül was both a teacher and a learner of many schools and particularly of the Kagyü, and in this he followed the example of his previous incarnation. In such an atmosphere our vision was greatly enlarged. When I left this friendly and all-embracing society I felt a slightly narrower life was closing round me; though within my monastery, as with its neighbors, religious study and meditation were continuously practiced, fewer monks came from other schools. Everything seemed to have slowed down, especially at Dütsi Tel since the death of the tenth Trungpa Tulku Rinpoche, and I was hoping to revive this spirit of expansion and development. It was a great consolation to me that Khenpo Gangshar had promised to come and help us. However, at Namgyal Tse there had been some progress; its seminary was attracting scholars from many different schools.

Akong Tulku came away with me, though he wanted to study further at Sechen. On our journey we met many monks carrying their books on the tops of their packs; their first exchange was always "What philosophy have you studied, what courses of meditation, under what teacher, and at what monastery?" for the monasteries in that area were in a very



The author (right) *with Akong Tulku.*

Yak-skin coracles on the Tsangpo River. PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.



flourishing state with constant exchange of people seeking instruction in various spiritual techniques; there were laymen also engaged on similar pilgrimages.

It was now apparent that the Communists were becoming more officious; they now checked all travelers, and we were told that they sometimes made arrests, though we were not actually molested.

On reaching Surmang I received an invitation to visit China, and the Communists also wanted me to join the central committee of their party. Since my secretary was already a committee member, I said it would be unnecessary for me to join as well, but should he be prevented from attending the meetings, I would take his place. Moreover as he was the more experienced man, he would be of greater use to them and he could speak on our behalf. This could not be objected to, though my monks realized that the Chinese, if their demands were not complied with, would certainly take further steps to get me in their power.

TEN

Khampas in Revolt

HIS HOLINESS the Dalai Lama had visited India in November 1956 for the Buddha Jayanti celebrations held every hundred years in memory of the Buddha's enlightenment and had returned to Lhasa the following February. While away, he had met Buddhists from all parts of the world and we now hoped that, with this publicity, he would be able to improve conditions for the rest of us, so our thoughts and devotions concentrated on this hope. Each New Year the festival of tsokchen was held at Surmang, and religious dancing took place for three days from sunrise to sunset; on the fourth day this went on for twenty-four hours with hardly a break. This was the first time that I had been able to take part in it. I looked forward to doing so and practiced hard, so instead of being utterly exhausted, as I had expected, I did not feel it too great a strain. I found that dancing, when combined properly with meditation, fills one with strength and joy.

Soon after the festival we sent monks and transport to Sechen to fetch Khenpo Gangshar who was to be my private tutor as well as director of the seminary. Apho Karma had already said that he wanted to retire as he was growing old and feeling very tired. He thought that he had taught me all he could, and was now more my attendant than my tutor. I asked him to remain as a member of my household and as my close adviser; he had been with me for so long and was almost a father to me. But he said that even as an adviser, the work was too much for him. He wanted to go back to meditate at the hermitage where he had once lived for three years behind bricked-in doors, receiving food

through a panel, so it was arranged that he should leave me. This parting was a great grief to me, but it left me freer to make my own decisions without asking for outside advice.

We were all delighted to welcome Khenpo Gangshar, who seemed happy to be with us, so we lost no time in starting the first study course under his guidance. It was indeed fortunate that he had been able to reach Dütsi Tel without mishap, for soon afterward a great number of refugees came through from Derge, who told us that they had met severe fighting on their journey. Since Sechen lay on the farther side of Derge we felt very anxious about Jamgön Kongtrül and feared that he might be entirely cut off from all further communication. This was the first serious outbreak of hostilities, and the refugees told us that the Communists were now killing many of the defenders' families; but as far as they knew the monasteries had not been touched. It was clear, however, that the outlook was becoming more threatening every day.

I had to complete my studies and this still meant very hard work; the first course at the seminary was on the Madhyamaka (the middle way) and also on the sacred text of *Hevajra* by the third Gyalwa Karmapa. Besides this there was much else to claim my attention, for I had to direct Surmang, to officiate at rites, as well as to go out to the local people when they asked for help in case of illness or death, or for teaching and advice. In cases of emergency I could be called upon in the middle of the night, so I often got very little sleep.

The news from East Tibet was becoming worse every day. We now heard that the Communists had formed groups of all sorts of people, in fact, anyone that they could enlist. They had indoctrinated these men with their own ideology, and had sent them to act as spies among the villagers and to report on their activities. An order had been sent out that all arms must be handed over, and the groups went round to see that this was carried out. At the beginning the people did not refuse to give up their arms and made little remonstrance; they tried to be cooperative and peaceful. However, the Communists became more and more abusive and a number of people were imprisoned by them and this continued until the Tibetans could stand it no longer. Then for the first time they organized retaliation at Denko, Ba, and Lithang. Their leader at Denko, when ordered to hand over his arms to a Communist official, made pretence of doing so and then suddenly shot the official dead. This was the signal for his followers to attack the town, and many Chinese

were killed or taken prisoner. The real conflict now began and the local leader became one of the leaders of the Resistance in Kham, which is the general name for East Tibet.

Refugees were leaving in ever-increasing numbers, particularly from Derge, to seek shelter in Central Tibet close to the Dalai Lama. Up till now there had been little trouble around Surmang which was on the borders of Nyishu-tsa-nga, though all this district was under the Communist administration of Chinghai; we had all been allowed to move about as we liked, provided that we gave no support to the people of Derge, so I was able to go on working at the seminary with about thirty other students under Khenpo Gangshar, and had more or less completed my studies in hinayana (basic teaching) and mahayana (wider teaching) and had also done a certain amount of work on vajrayana (advanced teaching) though this needed further study.

One day I received a secret message from Jamgön Kongtrül to say that he had escaped from Sechen and was on his way to Lhasa. He would pass near Surmang and he wanted Khenpo Gangshar and myself to join him at a place on the border with as little publicity as possible and accompany him to Central Tibet. We went there and found him together with some of his senior monks and other refugees. However, by the time we reached him, his attitude had slightly changed. Instead of urging me to go with him, he said that we must make our own decision; the work that we were doing at Surmang was very valuable, and it was important to consider whether it should be continued or not. It was very difficult to know what course to follow; besides I knew that if I returned to my work at Surmang I might never see my guru again. We talked the matter over with the other senior lamas and came to the unanimous conclusion that we would do as Jamgön Kongtrül thought best. However, he would not take the whole responsibility; he only gave an indication that he thought Tibet could not go on as in the past and that it would be best for us to plan afresh. He said, "The law of karma cannot change; each one must face his allotted destiny; each one must follow the guidance of his own inner conscience."

The authorities at Surmang were rather perplexed since they considered that, as my guru, Jamgön Kongtrül should give me specific instructions. Finally, we decided to go on with our work at Surmang; if an emergency should arise, either Jamgön Kongtrül would get in touch with me or I with him. So we said good-bye, while I asked him to prom-

ise that we would meet again. He replied that we would meet in one way or another, but again said that "the teacher is within oneself and the Way is also there." He added, "You may have to face great difficulties without a teacher; everyone must now be prepared to stand on his own feet. Khenpo Gangshar is taking my place and will help you for the time being." We left Jamgön Kongtrül with great sorrow, and a day later he resumed his journey.

My life had evidently reached a crisis. I was faced with the knowledge that East Tibet no longer existed as a spiritual center and everything looked very dark. More refugees were continually coming from the province of Derge. The Communists had given orders that all our villages and monasteries must be responsible for keeping order, and if we encouraged the refugees, we ourselves would be defying the Chinese government. In spite of this, since they were coming in such large groups with all their goods and cattle, it was absolutely necessary for them to have somewhere to camp; I was able to let them have some camping grounds on our land. They gave me further details about the situation in Derge. The young king's mother, in her capacity of regent during the king's minority, had been obliged to take part in the Communist committees until she was informed that she must no longer remain in the province. Then it appeared that the Communists had taken her to China and nothing further was known about her. The young king and his ministers had escaped from the palace and had formed their own Resistance group, being joined by the local militia and later by other guerillas. At first their offensive was very successful. They used to dig trenches across the roads to stop the Chinese lorries, thus enabling the Tibetans to get possession of their arms. The king's forces were supported by all the local inhabitants and together they were able to occupy most of the Chinese-controlled towns in the west of Derge province. In the east, however, there was no large guerilla force, and the Communists were destroying the monasteries and taking the monks prisoner, accusing them of possessing arms though this was not true, and they also said that the monasteries would be used by the Tibetan Resistance fighters. In the central part of Derge the Communists, after making friendly advances to the senior lamas, either kidnapped or shot them. Palpung was destroyed. At Dzongsar the Communists surrounded the monastery for seven days and prevented the monks from getting water,

so that finally they were forced to surrender. Many senior lamas were shot and the remainder of the monks arrested.

Those senior lamas from the various monasteries who had not been immediately shot, were taken to Gönchen. There, poor country folk were brought along and force was used to make them concoct stories of the evil deeds the lamas had committed. Many Tibetans refused to comply and instead, though unarmed, they fell upon the Chinese; they managed to kill some of them and then took their own lives. One Tibetan beggarwoman, when told to shoot the khenpo of the monastery, took the pistol and shot herself instead.

My first endeavor on my return to Surmang was to carry out the last wish of the tenth Trungpa Tulku and to enlarge the seminary. It was already overcrowded since all our monks except the trainees and those specially occupied had joined it, while about 150 monks had come from outside monasteries. The latter had already completed their earlier studies and came as what might be called in England "postgraduates." Khenpo Gangshar appointed four kyorpöns (tutors) as instructors and also gave me authority to assist in the teaching.

I at once formed a committee mostly of laypeople to raise money and control the finances of the new seminary. Our first step was to increase the annual contribution from the monastic farms, which were managed by a lay bailiff. My bursar and some of the senior lamas, especially the heads of the various departments, objected strongly to our building a seminary largely to benefit monks from a distance and spending capital in this way. So I invited them to a midday meal and told them how important Jamgön Kongtrül, Gyalwa Karmapa, and myself considered the seminary to be in preserving our Buddhist way of life. I added, "Even if the Communists destroy the whole place, the seeds of knowledge in our hearts cannot be destroyed. Even if we build today and our building is torn down tomorrow, I will not regret the spending. It would be a greater regret if we hoarded and what we had hoarded was taken from us without any progress having been made in the spiritual understanding of our people. The tenth Trungpa Tulku planned to enlarge the seminary and I am only fulfilling his wishes." Since I was his incarnation, love for me overcame the objections of all but a small minority, and work was soon started on the new building.

Our studies at the seminary in the Varshika Vihara at Dütsi Tel continued steadily. Khenpo Gangshar told me that I must take a teacher's

course of training to enable me to be a tutor in metaphysical studies and also to give instruction in meditation. I began to teach, and he examined my pupils to see if they had really understood. Sometimes I had to teach in front of him and though I knew my subject I found this embarrassing; at the beginning I was very nervous, but later on he found less to correct and this gave me confidence.

I was now working with Khenpo Gangshar's help on the comparative study of the different schools of Buddhism and I found more than adequate material for these researches in our main library. Jamgön Kongtrül had often told me that we must make great efforts to overcome any divisions among the followers of Buddhism and how very important this was at the present time, if we hoped to protect ourselves from the destructive influences of materialism and Communism.

Although the Chinese menace seemed to be getting stronger, we went on with rebuilding our seminary. I called in silversmiths and goldsmiths and indicated the images to be made, and also arranged a meeting with the master artists, craftsmen, and carpenters. The artists mostly came from the Gardri school, the gold- and silversmiths from Mensar. We discussed the designs for the new frescoes and the painting of the ceiling, pillars, and furniture. The particular methods of the Mensar school were used for molding the images which were to be plated with gold.

We had to provide the workers with food and accommodation and once a fortnight every man received a present. Wages were given on completion of the work and often took the form of goods rather than cash; mostly domestic animals were given, sometimes amounting to as much as five hundred beasts, including horses, mules, yaks, and dris. Such things as brocade, wool, furs, leather, or grain were also given in payment. Supervising the builders with my secretary for at least two hours a day kept me away from work in the seminary.

By the New Year 1958 the building was finished and the golden roof of our new assembly hall erected. The monks were so proud and elated about it all that they seemed unaware of a possible Chinese menace; for myself, I could not but feel apprehensive.

The New Year celebration with Khenpo Gangshar was a particularly wonderful occasion. We created a new ceremony for it in the assembly hall of the monastery which was attended by all the monks, and held religious debates and lectures.

* * *

Throughout 1957 at Surmang, Chinese officials had been constantly coming and going, spying out the land. Now that the Resistance Party of West Derge had put guards on the border, the Communists suspected us of helping them, for both monasteries were in very strategic positions. About a month after the New Year some twenty men of the Chinese military intelligence came to Dütsi Tel. As had been done previously, we arranged for their accommodation at a nearby monastery. However, on further news coming through of the revolt in West Derge, the Communists insisted on being accommodated in Dütsi Tel. They were not pleased with the rooms we gave them and early one morning they actually came to my private residence in the old fort and billeted themselves in one of the halls. I was there alone with Khenpo Ganghsar when my personal attendant rushed in almost speechless; all he could utter in his panic was "They have invaded us," and he was hardly able to explain what had happened. Looking through the window, I saw the Chinese dismounting and unsaddling their horses; others had already taken their baggage into the courtyard. My attendant insisted that we must leave while there was still time. I did my best to calm him and told him not to show any fear. My secretary, who lived in a nearby house, then arrived. When we told him what was happening, he said it might not after all mean such complete disaster and advised us to stay where we were.

At breakfast time word came from the chief Chinese official to say that he would like to see me, so I went down. He presented me with a roll of yellow silk and a Tibetan translation of a book by Mao Tse-tung. His interpreter said that they had come to guard the place and help us. He apologized for having intruded on my private residence, but owing to its strategic position it was essential to station troops there. He begged me to carry on with our activities and thanked me for my hospitality. As their host I gave them butter and other foodstuffs. I asked them to pay no attention to my monks who would be passing through the courtyards engaged simply on their religious duties; should they hear chanting or discussions in the night, they should not feel disturbed, for this was part of our everyday routine.

The Chinese official appeared to be smiling all the time and was very courteous. Each night the soldiers kept guard on the gate with a machine gun. I was often called upon to go down and talk to them through an interpreter. At first my secretary used to accompany me, but afterward

it seemed easier to go alone. The officers continually told me that China was the largest nation in the world and had the greatest military strength; their battleships were so enormous that horse races were held on their decks, and their airplanes flew with such speed that they could just scoop up any enemy soldiers. I noticed on these visits that the head official and his subordinates were Chinese, but the soldiers seemed to be Tibetans. The explanation for this was that when the Chinese took over our province they got hold of many of the Tibetan young people and took them on as servants or students; later they conscripted them into the army, although they claimed that they had joined as volunteers. I found these soldiers much more respectful and less noisy than I expected.

The party stayed quietly in the fort for about two months, but if I left to pay a distant visit, particularly in the direction of the border, I was very closely interrogated on my return.

Since for some time Khenpo Gangshar had not been feeling well and needed a change, I went with him to the holy Mount Doti Gangkar, in the caves of which Guru Padmasambhava used to meditate, and where lamas from Surmang often went for retreat. It is a very high mountain with two beautiful lakes at its foot; in one the water is green, and in the other, black. Its crest is covered in snow. The legend goes that in the golden age this snow never melted and shone like a diamond. In the following age it was like an onyx in which light and darkness are mixed. In the third age, however, it was to become like iron; everything would be dark and our time in Tibet would be over. When we reached the top of the mountain we found that the snow fields were melting and that great expanses of dark rock were showing.

All this made a deep impression on Khenpo Gangshar. The legend of the three ages seemed to indicate to him how urgent it was to prepare for the dark period before us; there was so much to be taught in so short a space of time. He quickly recovered his health and felt all the more inspired to continue his teaching at Surmang.

On our return, we found that the Chinese had quitted my residence. Khenpo Gangshar now decided that we should no longer give lessons exclusively to the monks who attended the seminary; the more immediate need was to teach all the people. In the autumn he held a large meeting in our assembly hall. He talked all day from seven in the morning till six at night with only a two-hour break. He explained in simple terms how necessary it was to realize the times we had reached. We might no

longer be allowed to perform our rituals, but this would not destroy the fundamental teaching that the Buddha had given us, nor the integrity of the Tibetan people. He quoted, "Cease to do evil, do what is good, purify your minds," that is the Buddha's teaching. We must act in the right way and be aware of ourselves. We must build our temples within ourselves. All the teachings of the Buddha, from the first, on the truth of suffering, to the last, on enlightenment, must be integrated and brought together in practice. Khenpo Gangshar then told them how to practice awareness and compassion. He encouraged everyone to take the vow not to kill or harm and, in order to be able to carry out this intention, to learn to control himself before acting.

After this, Khenpo Gangshar held a second meeting, this time for all the monks. He told them that they must give more help to the laypeople who had no opportunity to study. The divisions between the different schools must be abandoned. They must give the fundamental training on how to take refuge in the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha and on how to develop the four "divine stations," namely loving-kindness, spiritual joy, compassion, and equanimity. Concerning equanimity, he stressed that human rights and nonviolence were particularly important in the anxious times that we were going through. He considered that they should follow the system of the Kadampas, whose teaching specializes in the means for developing loving-kindness (*maitri*). The doctrine of loving-kindness should be combined with that of mahamudra and atiyana; these two are the method of meditation on the ultimate teaching of the Buddha.

Khenpo Gangshar visited many of our hermits who had taken vows to remain in seclusion, telling them that they must experience the shock of reentering the world and learn how to retreat within themselves. He brought them back to Dütsi Tel. Some of the monks at Namgyal Tse did not approve of this and wanted to come and debate on the subject with him, which request he gladly complied with. They put forward their case quoting from the scriptures. Khenpo Gangshar, however, told them that theories are insufficient without practice, and asked them to stay and help the many people attending the monastery. Later, one of these lamas became his devoted disciple. People came from all parts of the district to hear the khenpo. He arranged that the senior lamas and tulkus should mix with the community and taught that no man should consider himself to be above his fellow. He himself saw and gave practical instruction

to those who asked for help. Soon, however, the audiences became so large that it was impossible for a single man to deal with them, so he divided them into groups, and arranged for some of us to give talks which he superintended. This was very good training for us and particularly helpful to me.

Although I was still rather weak in medical studies and the mathematics of cosmology which includes calculating the calendar, my general studies were now completed and it was time for me to take my degree of kyorpön (tutor). So for three months I withdrew from all other activities and revised my studies with the help of Khenpo Gangshar who would sometimes come in the afternoons to answer any questions I had to put.

My examination and that of two other monks took place on an auspicious day in the grounds outside the monastery which had been fenced off for public lectures, and it was attended by the neighboring khenpos, kyorpöns, and senior lamas. A central throne was placed at the end of the field on which Khenpo Gangshar sat, with four kyorpöns sitting in line with him. Two rows of seats ran at right angles to these, the candidates being in front so as to be ready, when their turn came, to stand before Khenpo Gangshar. The rest of the rows was filled with the attending scholar monks and kyorpöns. These took an active part in the examination which was in the form of a dialectical discussion: The candidate was first required to answer any question the monks shot at him, then in a return attack to put his own question to the scholars. I am told that similar practices prevailed in Christian monasteries during the Middle Ages. The examination lasted for three days; the first was the most difficult. Each day food and tea were offered to all those attending. I was given the degree of kyorpön, equivalent to a doctor of divinity degree in England, and since I had already been specially trained in lecturing and teaching I also received the degree of khenpo (master of studies).

ELEVEN

Lonely Vocation

WHILE THE EXAMINATION was going on more bad news came from Derge; almost every monastery had been destroyed there and the lamas had received brutal treatment. The people were more and more enraged at the attacks upon religion and a great number of peasants, both men and women, were joining together to fight the Communists. In the face of this almost universal attack the Chinese, as an act of appeasement, had released the few lamas who were still alive. We heard rumors that although Sechen Monastery had been destroyed, some of the senior lamas had not been killed.

Khenpo Gangshar waited till after the examination to tell us that since Jamgön Kongtrül was no longer at Sechen, he felt he must go back himself to see if he could help in any way. We asked him if he could not wait until the weather became warmer, for winter was now approaching; however, he thought this was an emergency which should be dealt with immediately. He said it might be possible to talk to the Communists and get them to understand the religious ideal of nonviolence.

Pupils were now flocking to the seminary in such numbers that the Chinese became suspicious and wanted to know what we were up to. They knew that Khenpo Gangshar was connected with Jamgön Kongtrül and suspected that he must also not agree with the Communist regime. Ever since the Chinese had occupied the forest area near Surmang, they had been sending officials from Jyekundo to supervise the trade in timber which they had taken over in 1953 to the financial loss of the Tibetans. Now an official arrived ostensibly on the same work, but we were aware

that the reason for his being with us was to spy on Khenpo Gangshar. We told our khenpo about it and suggested that it might be dangerous to continue our lectures. His reaction was unexpected; he said that he was delighted to have the opportunity to speak to this man about the doctrine of nonviolence which would end all suffering. This he did, and also told him he would like to have further contact with Chinese officials. The spy, who was not a very high-ranking person, returned to Nangchen Gar, the Chinese headquarters and one of the larger towns of the province. Soon after, Khenpo Gangshar received an official letter saying that the Communists appreciated his ideas and if he could succeed in explaining them to the Tibetan people, they would agree to all he said. They sent him a present of some rolls of silk.

After considering the matter for some days Khenpo Gangshar decided to leave Surmang to meet the officials in Jyekundo. He wanted me and some of his disciples to accompany him, and added that these were not the times for pomp and that on such a mission we should all go very humbly on foot. His pupils and the newly arrived students were very upset as they all held him in great devotion; since his arrival, a greater spirit of virtue and a wider understanding had permeated the whole monastery. Though we felt anxious for his safety we could not influence him, so the party consisting of Khenpo Gangshar, myself, and several senior lamas and lay principals left for Jyekundo. When we reached the town we met the Chinese officials and discussed the matter for about a week. Khenpo Gangshar knew that if his doctrine of nonviolence was not accepted, there would be no hope of preventing terrible bloodshed. The Communist officials merely offered to report the conversation to the authorities in China; they said this doctrine only expressed the point of view of Buddhism.

While in Jyekundo, Khenpo Gangshar lectured in the town to Tibetans. He was invited by the local monastery to their seminary where some of the younger students were anxious to hold a debate on his ideas. He pointed out to them that philosophical clichés did not go very far unless they were also lived. There was a discussion on loving-kindness and he asked them its meaning. The young monks quoted from the scriptures, but he replied, "Quotation is no use in itself, we can all repeat scripture by heart. You must demonstrate loving-kindness by your actions."

Talking to the Tibetans in the town, he found that many of them were anxious to fight the Communists. He pointed out how very unwise

it would be to attempt this, since being practically unarmed they would have no chance of success; he emphasized this both in his lectures and when giving individual instruction.

Our monks took the baggage to the ferry on the Dri-chu, and we left Jyekundo on foot to go to Gyana Mani, a village three miles away where there is a celebrated group of mani stones. The Sakya abbot, Chögyal Phakpa, had the foundations laid for them when he returned from a visit to China in the thirteenth century. These stones cover several acres; it took us half an hour to walk all round them. Many mantras and sutras have been carved on them besides the complete Kagyur, the collection of basic scriptures which in manuscript fills 108 volumes. Several temples have been built on the site, one of recent date being two stories high. The huge "prayer wheel" in the middle reached to the roof and was about forty feet in circumference; it needed six or seven people to turn it. Khenpo Gangshar composed some new hymns as he led us round these sacred stones, periodically stopping to give a talk on their symbolism.

We stayed two days at Gyana Mani from where the Chinese arranged for a lorry to take us to the Dri-chu. We had never traveled by motor transport before and as we got into the lorry Khenpo Gangshar noticed how excited I was at the prospect of this new experience. He turned to me and said, "You know how strong material forces are; now you are having one of your first direct encounters with them. Study what you are; don't lose yourself; if you simply get excited about the journey, you will never find out what we are really up against."

Sechen was some seven days' journey from the ferry crossing where our baggage was waiting for us. The first four days I walked along in Khenpo Gangshar's company but did not feel strong enough to go all the way on foot, so I was allowed to ride with the baggage. We stopped at several monasteries, including Seshü, a large one attached to the Geluk order, to which the Dalai Lama also belongs. I had always wanted to make a pilgrimage to study in the leading monasteries of the different schools and now that I had the kyorpön and khenpo degrees it would be easy to make more advanced studies of their particular lines of thought. Seshü was a monastery I had particularly wanted to visit.

Since the abbot was still a child, Khenpo Gangshar had a talk with the regent who was very interested in his teaching on nonviolence as it

agreed with his own scholarly point of view. He took us round the monastery, and showed us the Buddha image which had been given to Tsongkhapa, the founder of the Geluk school, on his ordination; this had been made quite small so that he could always carry it with him. It had been preserved at Seshü and treated with the greatest veneration; one felt an atmosphere of holiness surrounding it. The assembly hall held three thousand monks sitting very close together, and the noise of the chanting from so great a number was tremendous. In the Geluk monasteries the study of logic plays an important part; after listening to lectures the monks congregate in the courtyard where they form debating groups according to the ages of the participants which can be from eight years upward; we were able to observe this method. When a monk put his question to another in the group, he stood up, stamped his foot, and clapped his hands to mark his points. When he succeeded, he swung his rosary from arm to arm, if defeated he swung it over his head. The monk questioned would return the attack sitting down. So the courtyard was extremely noisy and lively.

Unfortunately we could not stay for long at Seshü, and we resumed our journey in very cold weather, for the district lay at a high altitude; its farming highlanders live in tents.

When we were a day's journey from Sechen we were told that after all the monastery had not been badly damaged and that some of the lamas were then visiting a monastery close to our route. We sent them a message and they came to meet us at Phu-khung. They told us how the Communists had shut them up in one of the shrine rooms handcuffed in such a way that they were unable to move and had given them hardly anything to eat or drink. The Communists had made a thorough search, but found nothing, and after angry expostulations from the villagers they had released the lamas and left the monastery. The monks were allowed to stay on, though the Chinese camped all around, and the lamas had to get permission from them every time they went outside the immediate area. Other neighboring monasteries had been completely destroyed, and the lamas were very upset by this. They did not want to leave Sechen, but feared what might still happen. They discussed all this with Khenpo Gangshar. He told them that conditions were unlikely to improve and that he could hold out little hope of his being able to persuade the Chinese to accept the Buddha's teaching of nonviolence. He was afraid there would be no safety in any part of Tibet, but did

not know how a whole group of monks could keep together anywhere outside.

Gangshar now advised me to go back to Surmang to continue our common work, but since his pleas with the Chinese officials had not seemed very successful, I was afraid that it would be dangerous for him to remain in Derge. We had only three more days together, during which he gave me his last teachings on meditation and some other general instructions; then I had to leave. I had had to part from my guru Jamgön Kongtrül and now my last support, the guru to whom he had passed me on, was to be taken from me. I was alone.

When my monks and I returned to Surmang we found everything apparently going well at the seminary and everyone was anxious to hear what Khenpo Gangshar had been able to accomplish. During my absence the Communists had summoned my secretary to a conference. They told him that our monastery must pay fifty thousand Chinese silver dollars in taxes and that all Indian and European goods must be handed over to them and no further one obtained; these included such things as wristwatches and also any photographs of the Dalai Lama which had been taken in India. They also said that in future I must attend the conferences in person.

It was now the end of 1958. We held our annual twelve-day devotional celebration to dispel past evils and to bring us new spiritual life in the forthcoming year. It was a joyous time and I did not mind the hard work which this entailed.

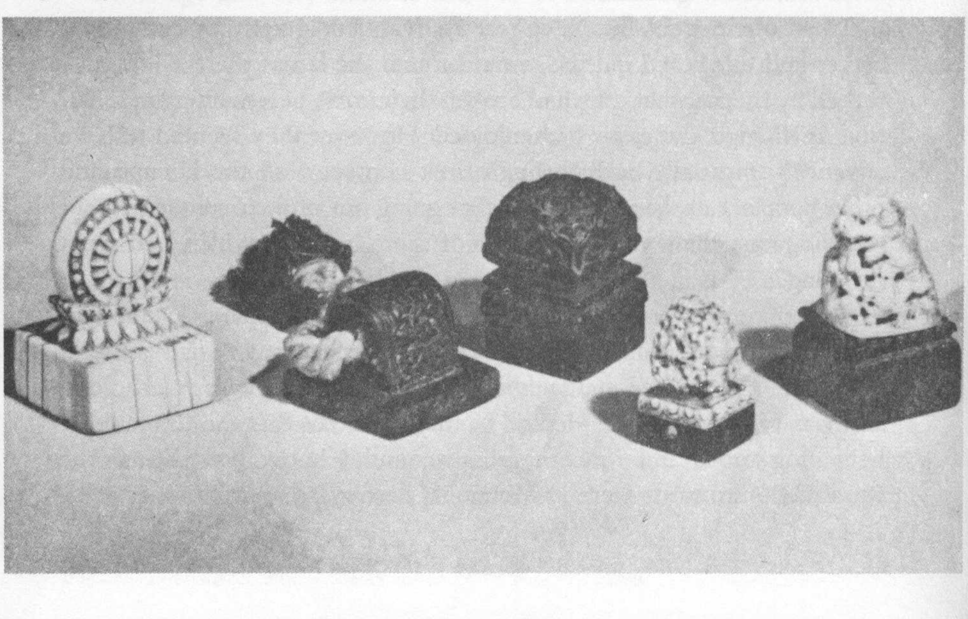
I had often spent the New Year festival very quietly at our retreat center and this year I did the same. I found the lamas there a little disturbed by the fact that they had broken their vows of remaining in seclusion as Khenpo Gangshar had enjoined. However they seemed to have advanced spiritually both through their contact with the khenpo and other people. I explained to them that going out of their center was not really against their vows, but part of their training, which had great meaning.

Returning to the monastery after the New Year, I spent several days discussing the situation with Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche, my regent abbot of Dütsi Tel. He seemed suddenly this year to have grown much older, and was very thoughtful. He said to me, "It seems that the Chinese are becoming more and more aggressive, and I know how brutal the Russian Communists were in Mongolia, destroying all the monasteries.



Image of Milarepa that belonged to Gampopa. A Surmang treasure.

The seals of the Trungpa Tulkus. The large ivory seal was offered to the fifth Trungpa by the emperor of China.





Headdress of a Khampa woman.

PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.

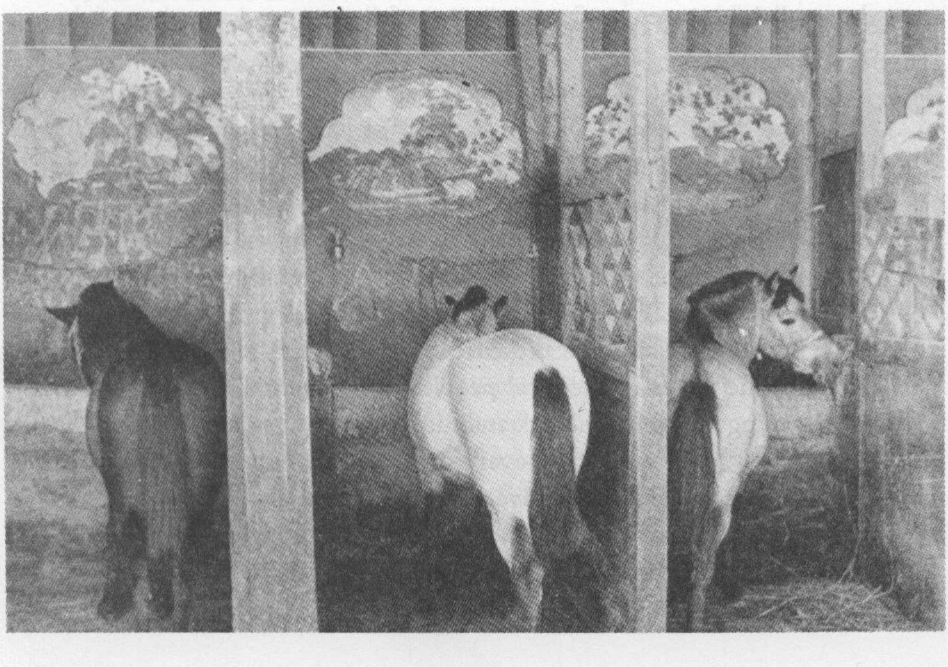


A Khampa nomad peasant.

PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.

The Dalai Lama's stables at Lhasa.

PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.



Perhaps an old man like myself could escape through death; my health is no longer good, but I feel very anxious for the younger generation. If you can save yourselves, and I am thinking especially of you, the eleventh Trungpa Tulku who have received so much instruction and training, it would be worthwhile. For myself, I feel I should not leave the monastery without consulting Gyalwa Karmapa as the head of our whole monastic confraternity. As the Chinese attitude toward His Holiness the Dalai Lama and its government is still respectful, we have not lost hope that he will be able to restore order and protect the dharma."

I was now nineteen according to the European solar calendar, but by the Tibetan which dates from birth by the number of lunar months, I was considered to be twenty. Though I had been given the degree of khenpo, I still needed to be fully ordained as a bhikshu. Since I was now old enough I was able to request my regent abbot and four other bhikshus to ordain me; as I had already studied the canon of monastic discipline (Vinaya) they agreed that the ordination could take place. I was given the begging bowl which had belonged to the tenth Trungpa Tulku and the yellow robe of a bhikshu. I had to take 250 vows, some of which I had already made as a novice (shramanera). My ordination took place at the altar in front of the image of the Buddha. This qualified me to conduct the rite of Sojong to restore virtue and bring purification from wrongdoing which takes place on full moon and new moon days; but above all I felt a sense of maturity as a fully prepared member of the sangha.

Rölpa Dorje Rinpoche now left on a tour to visit his devotees in and around Jyekundo and I took charge of the seminary as its khenpo. I still felt inexperienced beside Khenpo Sangden and the kyorpöns who had spent many more years than I at their studies. However, my secretary and the older disciples of my predecessor were satisfied, and I felt that I was following in the tenth Trungpa Tulku's footsteps. As I sat on Khenpo Gangshar's throne, I had a deep sense of all he had given us; more and more I felt the need of his presence and of a wider knowledge of the dharma. The needs of the local people often required my presence to give teaching or to help the sick and the dying. As this meant leaving the monastery at all hours nearly every day, I realized that I must have an assistant khenpo who could give more individual attention to the students, and we agreed to ask Khenpo Sangden to fill this post; he also

took over much of the lecturing. We were now studying *The Ornament of Precious Liberation* (*Tharpa Rinpoche Gyen*) by Chöje Gampopa.*

The sister of the tenth Trungpa Tulku, who had looked after the dairy at Dütsi Tel had died, and my mother now took charge. This made her very happy as she loved animals, but it also involved looking after the herdsmen and arranging about their wages. After a time she found this too much for her and gradually handed over the work to an assistant. When I was living in my own residence outside the monastery she was able to stay with me and do my cooking. This was a great happiness for both of us.

In the spring I received an invitation from the neighboring province of Chamdo, some three days' journey from Surmang, to come and lecture, for many of the people there were anxious to hear more of Khenpo Gangshar Rinpoche's teachings. After a week there, a messenger came from our monastery to tell me that Rölpa Dorje was ill; immediately afterward a second messenger arrived to say that he was dying. I at once returned to Dütsi Tel, traveling day and night without stopping. My monks were waiting for me and some forty of us went together to the place where we now knew he had died.

In fact from the start of his tour Rölpa Dorje had not felt well, and he eventually contracted severe influenza. He accepted that this was to be his last illness and chose to be taken to a village near the Sakya monastery of Thalung. When its abbot Deshung Rinpoche heard where he was, he brought him to Thalung itself, where he died a week later. Deshung Rinpoche, who is still alive in America, is a very kind as well as a learned man; he was a disciple of Ga Ngawang Lekpa, the mystical teacher of the Sakya school, and also of the tenth Trungpa Tulku. When Rölpa Dorje was dying he stayed at his bedside to the end asking him how his wishes could be fulfilled and if there was anything which could be done to lengthen his life. Rölpa Dorje replied that his work was finished and his duty done. For a few days he seemed to be recovering; one morning he was thought to be so much better that he could even walk. He asked the abbot to take down his will, saying that he wished to be reborn in Tsa, the birthplace of Milarepa. The abbot asked him who his future parents would be. He said he would rather leave that for Gyalwa

*Also known as *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*.—Ed.

Karmapa to discover. Deshung Rinpoche found it difficult to tell his monks this news, for they all expected his recovery; however, the senior monk of the party had to be told. Very early next morning Rölpa Dorje threw off his coverings and sat up in the vajra position. He asked his monks to read his daily manual of devotions. As they finished, he had difficulty in breathing and when they held him up he said, "You don't need to help me; I can look after myself." At that moment his earthly wishes ceased.

When our party reached Thalung the day after his death we immediately performed a short rite. I gave a talk about all he had done for us, his great kindness, and the many things he had given us, and we finished with meditation. We arranged to have his body cremated at Thalung on the fifth day after his death, for it had been his express wish that this should be done wherever he died. There was a rule that the monk who put the torch to the funeral pyre must be one who had never received teaching from the deceased. We had difficulty in finding such a person but eventually a novice who served in the kitchen was chosen. We took the ashes back with us to Surmang, being stopped on the way by many weeping devotees who wished to pay their last respects to his memory.

Our return led through Jyekundo where we were given further news of the Communists. For the last month all the Chinese officials, including the governor, had gone round the streets for two hours every morning to shovel up rubbish, dirt, and even human excrement; it was considered to be good physical exercise, as well as an example to the Tibetans. I myself met the governor on the road with his shovel, cleaning up the riverbank which people had used as a latrine. After we had greeted one another, our party stopped in front of the municipal building where there was a guard, and as the officials moved off, one of the guards near whom I was standing turned to me saying, "Please give me your blessing and a sacred protective cord." I asked him if he really meant this. "Yes," he said, "I have been with the Chinese ever since they entered Tibet, but more and more I feel faith in Buddhism." I was moved; the young man could not have been out of his teens.

On our return to Surmang we held the requiem services for Rölpa Dorje and during this time I had many unforgettable talks with Garwang Rinpoche and my monks while planning various improvements for both

monasteries. I little knew that this would be the last time that we would all be together at Dütsi Tel.

The monks at Kyere, a small monastery under the control of the king of Lhathok, now sent me a request to officiate at the enthronement of my young brother Tamchö Tenphel, the incarnation of their abbot. As I left Dütsi Tel, a storm was raging and fewer people than usual came to bid me good-bye, however, my mother was among those who came. I was feeling heavyhearted at leaving my monastery; almost as if I had a premonition that I would never return. The ceremony at Kyere was a beautiful one; afterward I was asked by the neighboring laity to give lectures and perform rites. I then traveled farther, visiting many other monasteries and villages and giving talks, mainly on the method which Khenpo Gangshar had taught. We passed several holy mountains and I was able to meditate in their caves. As we traveled, I was asked to organize retreats for many of the people in the district. These lasted sixteen or more days, during which we fasted, chanted, and performed religious devotions. The fasting was severe; on the first day, no nourishment was permitted after noon, and we were only allowed to speak during a short recreation period. The following day neither food nor drink could be taken and, except for chanting, absolute silence was kept. This two-day sequence continued for the length of the retreat. Those attending were laypeople who adhered strictly to the eight precepts for the period.

The eight precepts are: not to destroy life, not to take that which is not given, not to tell lies, to abstain from illicit sexual intercourse and from intoxicating liquors, then not to eat food after noon, not to wear garlands or use perfume, and not to sleep on a raised bed. Evidently not to take life, nor to steal or utter falsehoods, to abstain from unlawful sexual intercourse and from intoxicating liquors should be the rule of life for all Buddhists. However, if people are unable to keep to the discipline of all these, there is a simpler form that they may take, which is to make a vow to adhere strictly to one or other chosen precept for a given time, and to make an effort to adhere to the others as far as possible.

Being in the neighborhood, I took the opportunity to visit the king of Lhathok. I found that his ministers were anxious for the king's young son to be enthroned in place of his father and they wished me to conduct the ceremony. At times, the reigning king's state of mind rendered him

incapable of carrying out the responsibilities of government, hence his wish to abdicate in favor of his son. His early life had been difficult; being the youngest of four brothers, he was brought up in a monastery as he was the incarnation of a lama. However, his three brothers all died young and in order to ensure the succession he had been taken from the monastery and married to his brother's widow. This sudden change from the austerity of monastic training to the pleasures of the palace had upset his attitude toward life. This is an example of what often occurs in Tibet among incarnate lamas who have for any reason abandoned their vocation; some have died suddenly, while others seem to lose their purpose in life and become mentally deranged, or else their whole personality changes.

The ceremony of the young king's enthronement was largely secular, and as a spectacle it was very impressive. The participants wore strange traditional costumes which dated from the pre-Buddhist period.

The young king's grandfather had been a devoted disciple of the tenth Trungpa Tulku and was a very scholarly and spiritual man. He built several centers for meditation and teaching, but what made him especially famous in his day was the fact that he had collected the great library and installed a printing press. His three elder sons before their deaths had begun to build a nearby monastery for the Karma Kagyü school, which was still under construction when I was there.

As I was about to leave Lhathok, I received an invitation from Khamtrül Rinpoche, the supreme abbot of Khampa Gar Monastery, near Lhathok. He was the head of the Drukpa Kagyü school, which had over two hundred monasteries in East Tibet. At the same time I was asked to visit Drölma Lhakhang and Yak monasteries, both in the southwest of Chamdo province. Messengers from these two places had been sent to Surmang, so there had been a delay in their reaching me. They arrived on a day when we were all in silent retreat, and this gave me a little time to consider what I should do. A system of divination called *takpa* is used in Tibet on such occasions. A rosary is held in the hand, and after meditation and the recitation of a mantra, the beads are divided at random. Under the power of a particular meditation and mantra, and according to the number and conjunction of the separated portions of the beads, a result is indicated. I followed this method, and it appeared that I should visit Drölma Lhakhang; I knew that in these difficult times they were in great need of religious instruction and I was anxious to see my old

friends who so earnestly begged me to go to them. I sent a messenger to Surmang to tell them of my plans.

I had intended to go back to Dütsi Tel to make preparations for my journey but the following day a messenger came to tell me that several Chinese officials had arrived at Surmang and wanted to count the entire number of the monks, for they disbelieved what we had told them. They were saying that I had purposely been hidden, and this was causing suspicion. The officials insisted that I should be brought to them. My secretary and all the monks felt that I must certainly return, as they did not want Surmang to be the cause of trouble in the area.

It was evident that the Communists were about to impose further restrictions and to make increasing demands upon Surmang; the monks even suspected that they might intend to arrest me. I talked the matter over with my fellow monks who were in a state of panic and, though ready to offer suggestions, they would not commit themselves to any plan: The decision rested solely with me.

Then another messenger arrived from Surmang to say that the Communists were no longer so insistent on my immediate return and that apparently they did not intend to organize their system of collective labor for another year. Nevertheless it was beginning to look as if the time might come for us to evacuate Surmang and take refuge in Central Tibet. Needing time to meditate before arriving at a decision, I went for a fortnight to a cave near Kyere with Genchung Lama, a disciple of the tenth Trungpa Tulku who came to Dütsi Tel to give teaching when I was seven years old. At night we slept in the cave, which was about ten yards deep and during the daytime we sat at the entrance where there was a small platform. At its edge, a precipice dropped sheer down to the valley. Between spells of meditating we talked together, looking out over the landscape, and in spite of many anxious forebodings this was for us both a time of strange happiness. We spoke about the thoughts that had come to us in our meditations and shared reminiscences of some of the events in our lives and of meeting our respective gurus. I had two rather disturbing dreams. In the first I was standing on a hill above Dütsi Tel which was hidden in a cloud of dark gray smoke except for the gilded serto on the roof. In the other I saw Communists in their military uniform performing a Buddhist rite in our main assembly hall. Nevertheless I decided that there would still be time for me to visit Drölma Lhakhang and return to my own monastery before it was too late. So I sent for the

necessary transport and provisions for the proposed journey. Our acting bursar Yönten brought these a fortnight later, and he told me that the Communists had left Surmang, but that in the neighboring province of West Derge they had looted and destroyed many monasteries; he added that great numbers of refugees were passing our way.

The secretary of Kyere wanted to come with us to Drölma Lhakhang, but I thought he should stay in charge of my young brother's monastery, in case an escape should be necessary. We started out on an auspicious day. According to custom, the monks of Kyere escorted us for the first few miles, and among those who saw us off were many lay devotees; we all felt deeply moved. My little brother was particularly unhappy, though he tried to keep back his tears. The correct farewell ceremony is that the escort stand in a group, while their leader waves a white scarf in a circular movement and gives a long whistle running down the scale. He is followed by all the group doing the same. This means "Come back again." The party that is leaving ride round in a circle in single file and repeat this three times.

The reader will remember that before leaving Lhathok I had received an invitation from Khampa Gar Monastery as well as the one from Drölma Lhakhang. The former now lay on our route, and we were able to pay a short visit there. I was delighted to be with Khamtrül Rinpoche again, for we had met four years before at Khyentse Rinpoche's monastery. I was given a warm welcome with musicians playing on the roof. The monastery had been founded in the thirteenth century and was a leading one with some three hundred monks. All the supreme abbots had been known as great scholars and teachers. One in particular had been a renowned poet and his commentaries on the art of poetry, known as *khamdrel* were studied in all Tibetan schools. The present incarnation (the eighth) is a scholar and an artist of the new Menri school. I found that he was building a large seminary, all the paintings, images, and decoration of which had been designed by himself. He was doing on a larger scale what I had done at Dütsi Tel and we had many interests in common. Both he and his father were known for the eccentric way in which they treated their subordinates. For instance when a hall was being built they gave no indication of what the next stage was going to be, so the builders never worked to any plan, but from moment to moment as directed. When starting on a journey they did not tell their party

where they were going or how long it would take. Life was never dull in their company.

Wishing to have some guidance on his future, Khamtrül Rinpoche wanted me to join in an advanced form of divination called *prasena,* which requires several days' preparation, so we left his monastery together for a nearby retreat center where we pitched our tent in a circle of juniper and willow bushes. Khamtrül Rinpoche did not tell his monks why he was going into retreat, and they found this very strange. After devotional meditation, the prasena indicated that he should leave his monastery, but that his final destination should be India, not Central Tibet. It gave clear-cut directions about the length of time that he should stay in Tibet, the difficulties he would encounter, and the ultimate date of his arrival in India. He wanted me to accompany him, but I felt it was essential for me to go to Drölma Lhakhang, where we were already expected.

On resuming our journey we stopped at Jigme Rinpoche's monastery, and he joined our party. He made arrangements for me and himself, with two attendants, to travel by mail lorry. The rest of the monks were to follow with the baggage. In the rear compartment of the lorry there were three Communist soldiers fully armed with rifles and a tommy gun; the driver also had a rifle. There had been spasmodic fighting with the Resistance on this road, so it was considered to be a danger zone. As we switchbacked on the very bad surface by hairpin bends over several mountain ranges both our luggage and ourselves were badly bumped about and my two attendants felt very sick. Each time we reached a crest the soldiers became very apprehensive about guerillas. On one mountain we passed a mail lorry which had broken down; its occupants had had to sleep in it and they told us of their terror when they had heard a gun in the night. Passing our fellow Tibetans on their horses we could not but think how much happier and more comfortable they were than ourselves.

At Chamdo we stayed with a Tibetan official who was the senior member of the Communist district committee.

It was a new experience for me to sleep in a modern Chinese house with electric light, but it was only switched on for about four hours each evening. The family treated our party most hospitably. The official was a Buddhist and there was a shrine room in his house. His children had just returned from China for their summer holidays. We had the impres-

sion that they had been told not to talk about their school life; they were obviously happy to be back and had immediately changed into their Tibetan clothes and wanted Tibetan food. We thought they might ignore us since we were monks, but they were particularly friendly, coming to chat with us and even asking us to bless them. The youngest boy seemed more ardently Tibetan than the others.

The following day I walked round the town and looked at the new "people's store." Shopping was rather a complicated affair. First one asked if one could buy the required commodity and, if this was all right, one was given a ticket which had to be taken to another department to be stamped; finally this had to be taken to yet another department to pay the cashier who would hand over the goods. Armed soldiers were marching about the town and the Tibetans in the neighboring villages were very uneasy.

After spending two nights at Chamdo we continued our journey in a jeep arranged for by our friend the Tibetan official. Three schoolboys on holiday from China came with us. They were more talkative than our host's children and told us that they had not been happy. They had found the extremes of heat and cold very disagreeable, and life at school was not at all to their liking. As we passed some of the modern machinery which the Chinese had introduced into Tibet, these boys merely said how tired they were of such things, though our party was intensely interested to see them. We stopped our jeep at Gur Kyim, a town in the area of Tsawa Gang about eight miles from Drölma Lhakhang. Here the schoolboys got out and enthusiastically changed from their Chinese suits into Tibetan clothes. Jigme Rinpoche and I with my two attendants walked to the house of the head of the district who lived nearby. He had been ill for some time and did not appear, but his wife greeted us. She had expected a large party of monks on horseback and seeing only four of us on foot she immediately thought that there had been some disaster with the Communists and was relieved when we told her that the others were following more slowly on horseback with the baggage on mules. Since her husband's illness she had taken over his work as head of the district and this gave her so much to attend to that she said she would be unable to come to receive further instruction from me, much as she would have liked to do so. So we said good-bye and were lent horses to take us to the monastery.

It was the middle of summer and the country was looking at its best

with every kind of flower in bloom, but on the day of our arrival it turned cold with rain and sleet storms. The monastery had prepared a grand ceremonial welcome which was carried out in spite of the weather. Akong Tulku led the procession holding incense sticks, followed by musicians and monks carrying banners, and a monk holding an umbrella walked behind my horse. On arrival I asked Akong Tulku to find two messengers who could be sent to Tsurphu Monastery near Lhasa, with letters to Gyalwa Karmapa, Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen, and Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, who were all there together. My letters gave news of the conditions prevailing in East Tibet and of my arrival at Drölma Lhakhang. I asked Gyalwa Karmapa to counsel me how I should act, whether we should continue to maintain Surmang, or escape to Central Tibet. I wanted to know what I must say should anyone ask me to advise them, either at Drölma Lhakhang or in any other part of East Tibet. I added, "Anything you tell me I shall treat in complete confidence; I need your guidance more than ever."

I expected it would be about three months before I could get any answers, though I told the messengers to make all possible haste.

For the next ten days I gave talks and public and private instruction to both monks and laity and asked Akong Tulku and some of the lamas to continue the teaching after I had left. There were so many wanting to receive personal instruction that my monks had to keep order among them and arranged for them to queue up. At times the monks in charge lost patience, for which they had to be admonished. As for myself, I got no respite and even had to carry on with teaching while taking my meals.

My bursar Tsethar now arrived at Drölma Lhakhang. He told me that the monks at Surmang were becoming anxious lest I might leave them and escape to Central Tibet. Although the Communists continued to threaten drastic changes, they had not actually carried them out and the monks had begun to take less notice of their menace. Since everyone hoped that Surmang would be able to carry on as before, they wished me to return as soon as possible, and this was also his own view. He also believed that he was responsible for what I should do. I told him that I had written to Gyalwa Karmapa asking for his advice; I personally felt that there was a very live menace from the Communists. We were continually receiving further news of the destruction of other monasteries in East Tibet and we should take this as a warning. In my talks at Drölma

Lhakhang I had stressed the importance of preparing for great changes in Tibet, saying that we might be very near the time when our world, as we had known it, would come to an end. This disturbed the bursar, who continually tried to convince me that all would go on as before.

While we were at Drölma Lhakhang, we received an invitation from the abbot of Yak Monastery, Yak Tulku, to visit that place and asking me to give the wangkur of the *Treasury of the Mine of Precious Teaching* (*Rinchen Terdzö*), the same that I had given at Drölma Lhakhang when I was fourteen years old. On my accepting, many abbots and lamas belonging to the different schools in the neighborhood assembled at Yak; including the Yak monks, some three hundred were prepared to attend the initiation rite. The preparations were soon made and we began the wangkur with Genchung Lama giving the preliminary authorization (the kalung).

As I was expected back at Surmang my time was limited, so to hasten matters we began the wangkur at five in the morning and went on till late at night. To begin with it was hard work, but after a month I settled down to the routine, and when my attendants became overtired I arranged for them to work in shifts. Following this program we completed the wangkur in three months.

During these months many devotees came to see me bringing gifts. My bursar became responsible for these and bartered many of them for horses, yaks, dris, and sheep so that when we returned to Surmang they could be used for the upkeep of the monastery. This distressed me; I felt that some of the gifts should be distributed among the needy and the rest should be converted into money. My bursar was obstinate; he thought my real intention might be to escape without informing Surmang, in which case money and portable possessions would be of greater use to me. Our relations did not improve.

About a month after we had begun the wangkur we heard a rumor that a large party of refugees had arrived at Gur Kyim, and the following day I received a confidential message from Khamtrül Rinpoche saying he wished to see me but did not want anyone else to know about it. It was however necessary for me to tell Yak Tulku, and through him this information, though supposed to be confidential, spread like wildfire, so that when I interrupted the wangkur to make a journey everyone knew where I was going.

When I met Khamtrül Rinpoche he had discarded his monk's robes, and together with his attendants was in ordinary Tibetan dress; and for

the first time, I was aware of the effect on the personality of a man of no longer being clothed according to his vocation: It was only too clear that he was in disguise. He told me that he had had to leave his monastery under the pretense that he was going on a short pilgrimage; he had only informed his secretary and a few senior members of the monastic council of what he was about to do, so that the thirty monks who accompanied him knew nothing. They had already gone some distance when he told them that they had left their monastery for good. A renowned yogin called Chöle, who was the head of the retreat center of his monastery, was also in the party as well as two young tulkus in whom there were great hopes for the future; their parents had been left behind.

Khamtrül Rinpoche again asked me to join him in using prasena to check whether he was taking the right course. The same answer came, namely that he must proceed without hesitation, but difficulties might arise when he crossed the frontier into India. However, if he followed the fixed timetable and did not depart from it, all would be well. Again and again he asked me to go with him, but this was impossible because of the work I had already undertaken. I told him about my own difficulties, to which he replied that I must not allow myself to be held back because of other people. We said good-bye, hoping to meet again in India. The indication that the prasena gave was proved to be right when, as he was about to leave Tibet, the Chinese tried to stop him; but in the end he was allowed to proceed with all his baggage. His was the only party from East Tibet which succeeded in taking baggage with them. He is now in India as a refugee.

When I returned to Yak I found that everyone thought my meeting with Khamtrül Rinpoche clearly showed that I too was planning to leave Tibet. They said, if this was so, they would like to come with me. I had to tell them that Khamtrül Rinpoche had left entirely by his own choice and though he had asked me to go with him I did not even know myself what I should do. I added, "You seem to think that I have made a definite plan to leave; this is not so, and I have no intention of trying to save myself while leaving others behind. My bursar is in a complete state of confusion and is very unhappy; I know he also thinks that at my young age I might be influenced by a restless desire for change." We then went on with the wangkur.

Some weeks later Jigme Tulku, who was staying nearby, came to see

me. During our journey together from Khampa Gar he had impressed me as being a very spiritual, as well as an extremely intelligent man with a practical turn of mind; he had been a devoted disciple of my predecessor. He thought that I should escape, but a large party could not fail to be noticed by the Communists and he also realized that if the people in the district once knew that I was leaving, they would in their devotion all want to come with me. He said I must understand that a tulku like myself who has received such deep spiritual instruction has a duty to pass it on to others, so that I might have to consider escaping, not to save my own life, but to save the spiritual teaching of which I had become the repository. I asked him to talk to my bursar and explain this to him, but he felt that it was still not the right time to do so.

While I was still waiting for replies from Gyalwa Karmapa, Khyentse, and Jamgön Kongtrül and we were all going on with the wangkur, one of my close friends, a lama from Karma Monastery, arrived at Yak. He invited me in a rather unusual manner to visit a place near Karma which lay off the beaten track and where his own very influential family could look after me. He expressed the opinion that the Communists did not intend to take over Tibet permanently, but that at present it was more dangerous to be in an area like Yak, which was directly under the control of Chamdo. Surmang and its surrounding district would be much safer. He added that Surmang was expecting my return and hinted that I must not think only of myself.

A few days later another of my friends from Karma made the same suggestions in almost identical words. I realized at once that they had been put up to this by the bursar, convinced as he was that I should come back to my monastery.

As Yak was on one of the main routes to Lhasa, refugees were passing through all the time. They told terrible stories about the Communist advance, with the destruction of the monasteries and villages on the way. Many members of their families had been killed, the people had been questioned under torture and then accused of crimes which they had never committed. Lamas, monks, and high officials had suffered particularly in this way. The Communists were attacking farther and farther westward and had already got beyond Chamdo. My monks were beginning to be concerned for the fate of Surmang. On the other hand, the Resistance forces were very active and increasingly large numbers of people were joining them every day. There was a rumor that the refu-

gees who had already reached Lhasa and its vicinity were forming their own Resistance movement, but as yet we had no authentic news.

In spite of these anxieties, the numbers who attended the wangkur did not grow less. The desire to participate seemed to have increased especially among the older people; the younger ones were, however, less able to concentrate on the teaching day after day and it was not surprising that some of those attending the rites were overcome with sleep; it was therefore arranged that they should sit near their elders who would nudge them in case they began to doze. The monk in charge of discipline, the gekö, was on duty all the time, but his supervision was little needed, as there was good behavior throughout.

The wangkur took place in the assembly hall. The teacher's throne was in the center with the altar facing toward it but with a clear space between, where the servers could pace along. The altar, which was about twelve feet square, was disposed in three tiers on which the various symbolic objects could be arranged to form a mandala according to the four directions of space. A vase of pure water marks the eastern quarter with a blue scarf tied round it; this is the vase of Akshobhya Buddha, the Imperturbable One, and the water symbolizes purification from the strife of wrath; the peace it brings fills the pupil with gnosis (jnana). A crown with a yellow scarf marks the south; this is the crown of Ratnasambhava Buddha, the Jewel-Born; it symbolizes equanimity and the victory over selfishness. The vajra on the west, tied with a red scarf, symbolizes Amitabha Buddha, Boundless Light, and means discrimination, bringing compassion and freedom from desire. The bell on the north tied with a green scarf is that of Amoghasiddhi Buddha, it symbolizes the achievement of spiritual action and overcomes all envy. In the center a bell and vajra are placed, tied together with a white scarf in the shape of a cross; these appertain to Vairochana Buddha, the Luminous One, and symbolize the womb of dharma, that overcomes confusion and ignorance.

Each separate mandala is connected with a specific initiation. The rites were performed in order, and before each began the participants formally requested the teacher to conduct it. Each rite went through four stages; the first three corresponded to the body, speech, and mind, and the fourth went beyond symbol. Usually at the end of the ritual the wangkur of a dorje loppön gave the pupil authority to teach. It consisted

in handing over to him a drum, conch shell, throne, and the banner of the dharma. Some of the wangkurs lasted several days, others for as short a time as ten minutes.

After giving one of these longer ones I had to give eleven or twelve of the lesser wangkurs. Each entailed a complicated arrangement of the objects on the altar; this was the responsibility of the *chöpön* or "server of the rites," with his assistant. Yet another elderly monk was needed to read through the forthcoming wangkur on the day before the rite was celebrated, so that he could instruct the chöpön when and how the symbolic objects were to be arranged, since each mandala required the objects to be placed in different positions on the two higher tiers while the offerings were laid out on the bottom tier. When the wangkur was given, the chöpön had to bring the objects from the shrine to the teacher and afterward to return them to their places. He had to distribute water symbolizing spiritual purification, and grains of barley as a symbol of offering; it was also his duty to swing censers, so he was on his feet all day long. Our chöpön at Yag was an old man and he became extremely exhausted, but there was no one to replace him. This wangkur on the *Treasury of the Mine of Precious Teachings* had been long and complicated. Many of those who had attended wanted me to explain in more simple terms the significance of the spiritual teaching that they had just received. The coming of the Communists had greatly demoralized everyone; all had lost their sense of security, yet their deep faith in the religious way of life remained unshaken. The people needed a personal contact; they wished me to explain why they were so disturbed. They longed to receive more teaching provided it could be brought within their understanding. Since women were not allowed inside the monastery, I arranged for a special hall where the peasant families could come to talk to me. I tried my utmost to give help by impressing on all the necessity for regular meditation. I said they must carry out their duties and daily activities in the spirit of meditation, and if there should be no external guru, they must develop the teaching within themselves. I regretted deeply not being able to devote more time to them as my presence was now urgently needed at Surmang.

TWELVE

Into Hiding

THE DAY THAT THE wangkur of Rinchen Terdzö ended was a momentous one and a special service was held. But it was also the day when the messengers returned with the replies to my letters asking for advice. Gyalwa Karmapa gave me no indication of what should be done. He said it was important for me to carry out what spiritual work I could under present conditions. He was glad to learn that I had been doing well in teaching others and that the wangkur I had just given had been so beneficial. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche replied with a poem; in it he said more or less the same thing as Gyalwa Karmapa, but added, "The darkness of the barbarians sinks deeper and deeper into the heart of the country. He who would light a torch must do so from within himself. There is no need for disturbance of mind; the worthwhile minds will win."

The most distressing verbal news was that Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen had been captured by the Communists. Gyalwa Karmapa and Khyentse Rinpoche were trying to get him released, but I felt pessimistic myself. All three had been together at Gyalwa Karmapa's monastery of Tsurphu. Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche never took any thought for his own safety and, knowing this, the two others had been taking special care of him, even to the neglect of their own work. The situation was becoming increasingly dangerous, and refugees in their hundreds were pouring in from East Tibet, many of them disciples of Jamgön Kongtrül. A particular group of some three hundred people had suffered many casualties on the way, and since they were his ardent devotees they had begged him to come to perform the funeral rites for the dead and to stay

for a fortnight and give them spiritual instruction. Gyalwa Karmapa and Khyentse Rinpoche tried to dissuade him, but he himself felt he had to go. He said, "This stage in their lives is a time when they most need spiritual help and it is my duty to give it to them."

When he had been at this refugee camp for about a week, it was attacked by the Communists. Jamgön Kongtrül told the other refugees not to bother about him. He sent the majority off round one side of a hill, while he and his attendants went the other way. He told them, "What will be, will be; one cannot escape one's karma."

For the first night he was able to find shelter in a small monastery, but the following day the Communists discovered him and took him prisoner. One of his disciples, who held a senior post in Tibet, did all he could to get the lama set free, explaining that he had nothing to do with politics. When Jamgön Kongtrül was interrogated by a Chinese officer he was completely outspoken. It was natural for him to express his own spiritual attitude in his replies. The Communists may well have found his attitude difficult to understand, since it did not conform in the least to their creed, and though his sincerity may have impressed them it failed to obtain his release. During the wangkur at Yag I myself had a certain presentiment of these events for I suddenly got a strong impression of his physical presence; it was almost overwhelming. Also that night I had a vivid dream in which I saw him riding bareback on a white horse carrying volumes of the scriptures and his own reliquary. He spoke to me and rode on by a steep rocky path up the mist-shrouded mountain. In the distance, he seemed to drop his books which rolled down the path and fell on me.

Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche had opened my letter to Jamgön Kongtrül and sent me a reply saying, "You must not depend too much on others. If all acts are performed according to the dharma they cannot fail. Gyalwa Karmapa, Jamgön Kongtrül, and I have been looking for somewhere on the borders of Tibet and India to establish a community, but so far we have been unsuccessful. Indeed, until there is freedom from the bondage of egotism, there can be no permanent refuge and no abiding place in the world."

The messengers told me that the relationship between the Dalai Lama's government and the Chinese still appeared to be more or less cordial, but that on their route they had seen a number of military camps, some belonging to the Communists, others to the Resistance vol-

unteers; it had been almost impossible to travel. The Resistance army had been organized by a Khampa, Gönpo Tashi, a wealthy merchant from Lhasa. When the Communists ravaged most of East Tibet including his own property, he closed his business in Lhasa and himself organized a force of guerillas, giving everything he still possessed for their expense and his example was followed by other wealthy men.

The main headquarters of the Resistance was at Tsöna. There was no secrecy about the fact, but the Communists appeared to ignore it. Our messengers who had seen these East Tibetan volunteers in their Khampa uniforms said that they showed great dignity and that they all seemed very young and enthusiastic. They added that in Lhasa itself the inhabitants always showed a marked dislike toward the Chinese.

When the letters were brought to Yak the whole monastery was anxious to know their contents, though some of the monks feared that the news would only be divulged to a chosen few. I felt there was nothing in these letters which need be kept secret. I had been given neither instruction nor advice, so I asked the more senior monks what they now considered would be the best plan for me to follow. They suggested that since my gurus had given no indication whether or not I should leave Tibet, they must have thought there was no immediate danger and that all was going to turn out well in the end. It was beyond them even to imagine that the Chinese could take complete control of Tibet and that they would destroy all the monasteries and change the whole Tibetan way of life. The bursar was foremost in this opinion. A few lamas however, including the abbot Yak Tulku, thought that my gurus meant me to choose my own path. They were very concerned at the news about Jamgön Kongtrül and considered that I needed to be very careful myself. This was all extremely difficult for me; any decision I might make would affect not only myself, but all the monasteries in the district, particularly those connected with Surmang, as well as the lay population. Everyone looked to me as their authority and were prepared to follow my lead.

Though we had now finished the wangkur of Rinchen Terdzö the preparation and celebration of the vajra-amrita (elixir for spiritual health) rite was still to follow. However, we delayed these devotional exercises for three days in order to have time to discuss our immediate plans. I had more or less come to the conclusion that I should do as Surmang wished and return there, though a few of my monks agreed with Yak Tulku that I should effect an immediate escape, which would be easier

to do from Yak; other monks from Surmang could follow in their own time. I arranged a meeting with our own monks at Yak and asked Yak Tulku and Jigme Rinpoche to attend it. On the first day everyone was noncommittal. That evening Jigme Rinpoche came to see me saying that he thought I should not go back to Surmang, though of course the decision rested with me. He said he intended to take a strong line about it on the following day. This he did speaking with great emphasis. My bursar was convinced that he was trying to influence me to escape and that what he was saying ostensibly on my behalf was merely his own opinion. I said little myself at the time except that I believed great changes were inevitable and that the Communists would take over the whole of Tibet. The same afternoon Tsethar the bursar came to see me and let fly. He accused me of taking advice from people who did not belong to our monastery and who had no right to interfere with our affairs. He added that it was his duty to look after me. I must understand, he said, that I represented the entire Surmang group of monasteries and its devotees; all looked upon me as their head and only they had the right to serve me; with that he left. I realized that it was useless to reply.

The next morning I asked him to come and see me again. I told him that I was quite prepared to offer up my life for Surmang. I had wanted to talk to him about this for some time, but thought he failed to understand that I was not thinking about my own preservation; I added, "It is disquieting that you never consulted me personally: You should have done so before putting the matter to the others. However, I see your point and am very grateful that consideration for our monastery should come first with you. There is a proverb in Tibet which says, 'Two beggars need not dispute about how to run a king's affairs.' The decision rests with me, but I am ready for anything. If you wish you can take the responsibility."

In order to calm him down I tried to explain all this as serenely as possible, but I also said that we could not afford to delay a decision. I told Yak Tulku and Jigme Rinpoche of this conversation and asked them not to make any opposition, however anxious they were for my personal safety. On the third morning of the meeting the bursar was a little hesitant since I had laid the responsibility on to him. He merely said that he thought the right thing for us would be to return to Surmang; however, he did not wish to take the final decision which must be mine alone. I then spoke, saying that I knew my first duty must be whatever would

be best for our monastery and since all my monks were waiting for me there to direct affairs, there was no alternative but for me to come. Silence then fell upon the meeting, until my bursar exclaimed, "Is that all?"

We now began nine days of devotional meditation for the preparation of the vajra amrita.

In the meantime arrangements had to be made for our departure from Yak. The bursar seemed pleased that I had agreed to return to Surmang, but still showed that he did not wish to carry the whole responsibility. It will be remembered that when I was at Drölma Lhakhang I received many gifts and that he had bartered these for flocks and herds without my permission. He now wished to take these animals with us, which meant that we would require at least twenty men to load and unload the animals besides the herdsmen, and we would have to camp on the way. The monks, after having so looked forward to this return, now began to be a little anxious for our safety, for we had just heard that Andrup Gönpo Tashi's army during their passage from Lhasa had been successful in attacking many Communist camps, and that they had reached Pashö, where they had broken into the town's arsenal. They had raised fresh forces and appeared to be going in the direction of Chamdo. This meant that there was already fighting on the route to Surmang. The bursar now suggested that we should leave the animals behind, and ourselves split into small groups wearing lay dress. I agreed, saying, "We must not force the issue, if there is no alternative, this is our karma."

We were expecting to celebrate the vajra amrita on the following day, but that night as I was going to bed I suddenly felt ill and was in such pain that I fainted. At the same time the roof beams cracked in one of the shrine rooms in which devotions were being held at Drölma Lhakhang, which was felt to presage a disaster.

It was the custom in Tibet, when a person was taken ill, for his friends to send gifts to some of the lamas in the district asking for spiritual healing through their meditations, and Tsethar did this now on my behalf. One was sent to a lama who held a senior post under the Chinese administration. He sent back word that though he was sorry to hear of my illness, the arrival of the gift was a blessing, for it enabled him to let me know through the bearer that the local Communist committee had been discussing how they might get hold of Trungpa Tulku and were trying to discover where he was staying. He added that news had come

through that a Resistance group was centered around Surmang and that the fighting there was very heavy.

A number of people had come to Yak for the celebration of the vajra amrita and to receive its blessing. They were told about my sudden illness and Yak Tulku officiated in my place. Jigme Rinpoche, who was a doctor, was now determined that I should rest. He had never approved of my returning to Surmang, though he declared it was not his business; but now he insisted that I must rest for at least a month. Everyone realized that I was too ill to travel and that I could not stay at Yak for much longer.

My bursar consulted Yak Tulku, Jigme Rinpoche, and other senior lamas. They decided that he should go back to Surmang and find out what the position there really was, and in the meantime I should go wherever I felt inclined, but in secret: When Tsethar returned, we could decide what further steps to take.

Tsethar at once made arrangements to leave Yak with all except four of our monks, taking letters from me addressed to both the monasteries of Surmang in which I said that I hoped they would understand how I always wanted to serve them and that they must not think I had any wish to stay away. I begged them not to make any unnecessary resistance against the Chinese. I fully understood how difficult things were becoming, but there was no point in using force, which would inevitably lead to their extinction. On the other hand, if things got really bad they should try to join me in the Yak district which was nearer both to India and Central Tibet and where the local people were ready to help us.

Tsethar arranged for our herds to be looked after by some friends around Drölma Lhakhang. I advised him to take money and portable articles which could be exchanged, both for his own journey and for Surmang should the need arise. He followed my advice, though he said he was quite certain there would be no emergency and that on reaching Surmang he would immediately put my residence in order in preparation for my return. I repeated how very delicate our position was with the Communists, and that we must not show any antagonism toward them.

Some of the monks and laypeople escorted his party for two days. On their return, they told us that they had met some people from Surmang who had said that the Communists had already collected all the arms in the district, even meat choppers, and had posted guards at the

ferry across the river and at all points of importance on the road. We knew that if my bursar were to be captured, our own position would be in jeopardy as the Chinese would then know where I might be found. I had been recuperating at Yak for a week when we heard that the Communists were stationed on all the routes between Riwoche and Chamdo, though as yet no one knew how far their troops had penetrated beyond that area. We felt sure that they were in control of the ferry of Dongdrong Trukha, but it was uncertain from what direction they would approach us. All this was extremely disturbing.

My bursar had again assigned Yönten to carry out his duties, and since my private secretary had also left with the party for Surmang, he had been replaced by a monk from Drölma Lhakhang. One personal attendant remained with me and these three, together with a monk in charge of the horses, formed my immediate staff; all the other monks serving me belonged to Drölma Lhakhang.

We discussed our plans among ourselves. Invitations came from various people who had attended the wangkur; they offered to look after me and suggested that we might be concealed in the remoter parts of the country, but I was not convinced that it would be safe even there.

After a week's rest I was feeling stronger, so we were able to have a final session of devotional chanting together with a communal meal, ending with the marme mönlam, at which we prayed for a reunion of teachers and pupils and gave thanksgiving for the grace and knowledge we had received. All who were there held lamps which had been lighted from a lamp on the shrine. As the teacher, my lamp was the first to be lit, and from it the flame was passed on to all who were present. Then each person tied his white scarf to that of his neighbor and finally to mine so that the white band linked us all, and they all repeated after me a chant which resounded through the hall. The flame of the lamp symbolized the light of gnosis (jnana) which is individually received, but is an indivisible unity in itself. The chain of white scarves represented the purity of those holding it to strengthen their spiritual life and persevere with the teachings they had received. I thanked all those who had been at the wangkur; I had learned in the teaching and they in attending. I said, "none of us know what the future may bring, and we may never be allowed to be together again in the flesh, but spiritually we are one. Our having had this opportunity to be together is the beginning of a union that will last for many lives. To bring all this into our daily lives we

must continue our efforts to follow the promptings of the guru within ourselves. We must keep the balance between our mundane activities and our strivings for spiritual perfection. We must do our best to help all beings caught in the suffering that the world is now experiencing. We who have had this wonderful time together must now disperse. The assembly hall will soon be empty, with the shrine, the throne, and the decorations all dismantled, but we must not be too distressed. With the menace from the Chinese becoming ever more severe, everything demonstrates the impermanence of earthly existence."

We felt that my future plans must be decided upon within a week, for the Communists might discover that I was at Yak. There were many suitable hiding places in the district, but it was difficult to choose one without offending the many other kind people who had offered help. So I went into retreat at Yak and resorted once more to takpa divination. The answer was that the country around Yo would be best, the local experts concurred and my friends agreed to supply me with food.

I was still considered to be in retreat, my yellow curtains were always drawn, and it was not really known whether or not I was in the monastery of Yak. I asked an elderly lama whose room was next to mine to sound his bell and drum each day as if it came from my room; then I left in the middle of the night. Jigme Rinpoche and his brother came with me, also my personal attendant and one monk. Our horses and baggage had been sent on ahead to a place on the outskirts of the monastery where Jigme's brother and his servants were waiting. Yak Tulku who had accompanied us then went back. It was bitterly cold, we missed the heated wall of the monastery, and the night was so dark we could see nothing and had to trust to our horses to follow the trail.

The following morning at about seven we reached the house of the landowner to whom the valley of our projected hideout belonged. He gave us a warm welcome and we were thankful for the hot milk he offered us, for we were frozen. A fire of ox dung was immediately lit; it was smoky and gave out little heat, but it helped to restore us, after which we started off again. The landowner himself led us to our hideout which we reached in about five hours. We crossed a mountain pass which led us to a valley used for grazing cattle in the summer, but which was uninhabited during the winter months when the pass was under snow. Here the yaks used to be left to look after themselves, only the females (dris) being driven down to the farms for the winter. The further

end of the valley was inaccessible, being cut off by a high gorge through which the river Yo-chu escaped into the Gyemo Ngül-chu by a series of cascades and gorges. These grazing grounds were unknown to all except the local herdsmen and the landowner, and the place itself was called the Valley of Mystery.

We now had to look for the best place to set up our camp, so we slept where we were for the first night and started searching the following day. Up and down the valley there were a few primitive shelters used in the summer by herdsmen, so we picked on one of them at the far end on the banks of a frozen stream. The weather was fine and there was hard frost at night, though as yet no snow.

The landowner remained with our party to help, and we all set about putting the shelter in order. It was built up against a large rock and the walls were of loose stone. In order to put our tents inside we had to remove the roof. My tent and Jigme's, which he shared with his brother, were of white canvas, while my attendant and the monk who did the cooking had a larger one made of yak's hair, which also served as a kitchen. After three days the landowner with his own and Jigme's servants went back, leaving us with large supplies of butter and dried cheese made of boiled dris milk, as well as a lot of cakes made with butter, dried curd, hard cheese, and a particular kind of vegetable flour made from a kind of artichoke which had been roasted before being ground. All this was in addition to what Yak Tulku and Akong Tulku had sent with us. When our kind host left, he said he hoped he would be able to visit us occasionally and give us news of the latest political developments. He encouraged us to remain there for a long time, for he thought it would be impossible for the Chinese to find us in that remote place. He did not think that we would ever be completely cut off, as when the snow became deep he could in an emergency open up the path with yaks.

This was the first time that I had found myself isolated from the world without any visitors and almost without attendants. I was, however, ready to stay there for a long time as I had brought with me some sixty volumes of spiritual instruction.

We used to go out together to collect wood, but my attendant was rather upset that I should share in such domestic work, for he considered it his duty to do all these things for us. The birds woke us up each day and my mornings were spent in devotions and meditation. As the frost became more severe, it was almost impossible for me to use my bell and

drum as the metal was too cold, and we had to wear our sheepskin coats all the time. My young attendant was utterly self-sacrificing and only thought of my comfort, neglecting his own. He always managed to keep a fire made of twigs going in my tent both morning and evening, though it did little but warm my face as I gazed into it. I used to eat the midday meal with Jigme Rinpoche and his brother and we took long walks together in the afternoons; in the evenings we used to gather together with our two attendants in Jigme's tent which had an outlet for the smoke and was larger than mine. Jigme was in his fifties, not tall but very tough; he had a very practical way of looking at things with a wonderful sense of humor. It was never dull in his company, for he was an excellent storyteller and having traveled on pilgrimages to many places including India, he told us lots of amusing yarns about his experiences.

As the winter advanced, the yaks which had been left in the valley came down in herds to the lower pastures; it began to snow very heavily, causing avalanches and rocks to fall with a tremendous roar which at first we thought came from Chinese guns. As the snow was so deep we had left off expecting visitors, but one day a man suddenly appeared. It was an old servant of Jigme's on horseback with two yaks laden with foodstuffs. The snow had reached up to his stirrups, but the man said that he had not felt the cold as intensely as when he had had to travel in the biting wind. He brought us some butter and milk, which were all the more acceptable as we had long been without fresh food. He had no political news to report, but told us that Jigme's sister was very ill. He also said people were beginning to doubt whether I was still at Yak.

He brought me a letter from one of my friends, a tulku who had gone to Yak to ask for my advice; he wanted to know what his monastery should do in regard to the Communists. Yak Tulku had told him that I could not be disturbed as I was still in retreat, but I would write to him later. I was able to reply telling him that the situation was becoming very serious and that if his monks were thinking of escaping, it might be best not to delay too long. Both from a religious and a practical point of view it was very important not to cause any open antagonism with the Chinese which would only hasten disaster.

Jigme and I were feeling a little lonely and we longed for more company; since the servant was returning, I sent a letter to Akong Tulku to suggest his coming to join us. On receipt of it he immediately made

preparations to come, and was with us in time to share in our devotions preceding the New Year.

A local landowner sent several horsemen to bring us New Year offerings of food and gifts from Drölma Lhakhang and Yag monasteries. These were so lavish that we had almost more food than we could eat. The horsemen gave us some rather vague news about the Resistance forces which were fighting quite successfully in several parts of Tibet.

About three weeks later my bursar arrived with another monk. He had failed to reach Surmang, and the news he brought was extremely distressing. He told us that when he left Drölma Lhakhang he was able to cross by the ferry over the Dza-chu because the Communists had withdrawn their guards after collecting all arms in the district and making lists of all the local families and their possessions. They had been planning to establish a military camp near the ferry, but owing to an attack in the neighborhood from the Resistance they had for the time being been obliged to leave the place. So Tsethar was able to proceed and had great hopes of reaching Surmang, but on his way toward Lhathok he met travelers who told him that Surmang had been attacked about a month previously and Namgyal Tse had been destroyed; only very few monks had been able to escape. Dütsi Tel had suffered less; the senior secretary and a number of the monks had been able to get away and they had made for the district of Lhathok, which appeared to be safer. On making further enquiries Tsethar was told that they had found shelter in the monastery of Kyere. On his arrival there he found the party, and also my mother and two sisters who were in a house near the monastery with my young brother the abbot. In tents all around there were a number of villagers from the neighborhood of Surmang: The Communists had told these people that they could not remain in their own homes as they would be in danger from the guerillas; they must therefore go to Jyekundo under Chinese escort, but would be able to return later when the situation became more settled.

Tsethar was told that a few months previously the Chinese had arranged a very large and important meeting to be held in Jyekundo, sending invitations to all the influential lamas and heads of the district. This was a customary procedure, but this time there was a difference, for the invitations were more in the form of an order; since to decline would only worsen the situation, the majority agreed to come. At the meeting, the Chinese explained that they were there to guard the Tibetans from

possible danger; to emphasize this point the hall was surrounded by Communist troops. Each day the Chinese asserted with greater vehemence their sole right to authority, and eventually they tried to force the Tibetan representatives to accept Communism. All the Tibetans present understood that if they did not agree their lives would be in danger, and Rashü Behu, the head of the Rashü district, decided to escape. He walked out of the hall to where his bodyguard of five men was waiting with his horse, and they made off at a tremendous pace. The Chinese pursued them but did not catch up with the fugitives until their horses broke down, compelling the party of six to alight. A terrible fight ensued in which, after killing five or six Chinese, Rashü Behu himself was killed.

After this the Chinese became much more aggressive in their attitude: The body of Rashü Behu was brought back and displayed in the hall and a week later all the Tibetans who attended the meeting were arrested.

The Chinese now called meetings in the twenty-five districts under Jyekundo to impress upon the people that they must change to the Communist way of life. They were told that if they did not comply with these orders the lives of their representatives who had attended the meeting would be forfeit. This was more than the people were able to stand; they protested that their representatives could not answer for each one of them. When the Chinese demanded that everyone hand over his arms, the Tibetans rose in open revolt and armed resistance was organized in all the districts, each of which had its own center of Chinese administration.

The small Communist office in Namgyal Tse just outside the monastery was the first to be destroyed and similar attacks were made throughout the twenty-five districts of the province. They were successful in all the smaller centers. The Resistance fighters eventually reached Jyekundo and occupied the large monastery overlooking the town, which was still in Chinese hands, thus cutting off all communications with it. They had also tried to cut the Chinese road between Jyekundo and China but at each attempt it was immediately repaired by the Chinese. Many of the towns on this road were taken by the Tibetans and very severe fighting took place in Trindu, where the Communists in order to protect themselves had mined the roads. But the Resistance troops drove cattle in front of them to explode the mines and over a thousand Chinese in the town were killed. These successes continued for about one and a half

months. The Communists, however, then received reinforcements and their overwhelming numbers forced the Resistance party back.

Though the Chinese in Nangchen expected their compatriots to arrive soon, they were in a state of siege and had run out of food and water. In their desperation they resorted to strategy. They sent two Chinese who knew Tibetan out of the town disguised as lamas who, as they gave people to understand, had been forced to leave their hermitage. These men approached the Resistance troops and pretended that they were still under a strict vow of silence; to avoid having to talk they went on fingering their rosaries, their lips appearing to be repeating mantras. They both looked so genuine that the Resistance men believed they could be relied upon. The junior of the two indicated in dumb show that Chinese reinforcements were less than a mile away. At this the besiegers left their trenches in order to combat the oncoming Communists. The two lamas suddenly disappeared, and the Chinese in the town were able to make a successful sortie for food and water; when the Resistance troops returned to their trenches, having seen nothing of the Communists, they realized that they had been tricked. Fresh Communist troops arrived five days later and routed the besiegers.

The situation was now becoming very serious for the Tibetans; nearly all those living in monasteries or towns, particularly the able-bodied, were made prisoners. The Communists now in command were completely ruthless; the whole order of behavior was changed. Those who had been established in the administration before the invasion and had had friendly relations with the Tibetans, now had no control.

The Communist army was arriving in thousands and using automatic weapons hitherto unknown in Tibet. From their headquarters in Jyekundo and Nangchen they were sending their troops in all directions capturing the inhabitants and destroying the monasteries and the homes of the peasants. Some of the Resistance took shelter in Namgyal Tse Monastery. It was attacked by Communist troops from Nangchen and the fight went on for nearly two days, leaving most of the Tibetans dead in the monastery, as well as several hundred Communist soldiers. The whole place was looted, and the buildings destroyed. Dorlha, who had formerly been senior in the Jyekundo administration, was in command of the insurgent party; he fought with extreme bravery and then managed to escape. A few monks were able to get away and some of them discarded their robes and joined the Resistance, others were killed and

the majority captured. Garwang Rinpoche, the abbot of Namgyal Tse, had disappeared after attending the meeting at Jyekundo.

By now there was not a single monastery left to carry out its religious functions, between Dütsi Tel and China. All the districts were full of the wounded and the dying. Chinese troops were everywhere, while the people who had escaped were now starving. Women and children left in the villages were in no better plight. Many mishaps befell those who tried to escape; there were diseases and accidents, small children fell from their horses, and everywhere there was shortage of food.

As for Dütsi Tel it did not escape the common fate. It was attacked from the north: Chinese troops broke into the library and threw out all the valuable books, tearing off their covers; the good Tibetan paper was either just strewn around or else was given as fodder to their horses. Those treasures of the shrines which were made of precious metals, such as images and lamps, were broken up and the metal was sent off to China. The precious painted scrolls were taken down and used as trays on which to serve the soldiers' meals of meat and rice. Everything of value in the monastery was removed; they even broke into the tomb of the tenth Trungpa Tulku and left the embalmed body exposed.

Those monks who were able to escape had no other alternative but to abandon their monastery without attempting resistance. The elderly lama who directed meditation at the retreat center was, however, taken prisoner with some ten other monks. They were confined in the gönkhang, the temple of the tutelary deities. This was the oldest part of Dütsi Tel and dated from the sixteenth century, since when it had always been used for special spiritual activities. It was half chapel, half dwelling house. The elderly lama told his fellow prisoners, "Since this building has been set aside for meditation, it should still be so used, and this experience should make us realize its true purpose. We must accept that what has happened is all part of our training in life. Indeed, this is our opportunity to understand the nature of the world and to attain a deeper level. Though we are shut up here as prisoners, our devotions should be the same as if we were freely gathered together in the assembly hall." He went on in this way, and gradually, as this deeper spiritual teaching was put before them, his companions recovered their calm.

The prisoners were scantily fed on a small daily portion of roasted barley (tsampa) and given hot water to drink. The younger monks who had been captured were sent out to remote valleys under an armed Chi-

nese guard who also wore Tibetan clothes; they had to search for Tibetans in hiding and tell them that they must return to their villages. Everyone was questioned about me, but the monks themselves did not know where I might be found.

The building itself was left intact, being used together with the surrounding houses as an army base. From there the Chinese attacked all the neighboring monasteries and villages, bringing their prisoners back to Dütsi Tel. The fort which had been there in the time of Adro Shelubum and had become part of the monastery, was now used once more as a watchtower.

The Chinese army stayed at Dütsi Tel for about a month. They had intended to make it a permanent center, but on receiving orders from army headquarters they evacuated the place, carrying away everything which might be of value to themselves; the prisoners they took with them. The cattle in the district had all been rounded up and sent to Jyekundo Airport which was in a flat valley, a few miles from the town. The journey was a cruel one for the prisoners, as their captors were ordered not to delay, so they traveled night and day, with the Tibetans on foot and the Chinese on horseback. When they reached Jyekundo, the women were sent to the airport to look after the cattle; their children were taken from them and placed in communal nurseries under strangers. All able-bodied men and a few women were put on forced labor for road making and those who were too old to work were sent to concentration camps, together with those senior people who had not been shot.

Before the armies left the district, the Communists had entered the houses of the better-class Tibetans and ransacked them; they had taken the clothes of the masters and made the servants wear them, and the masters had been forced to put on the servants' clothes.

The country was full of informers: The newly arrived Communist army made use of everyone who could help them, such as Chinese officials previously established in the district and Tibetan youths who had been recruited into their army when they first invaded Tibet; a number of these boys deserted to the Resistance, but those who remained with the Communists became useful as guides.

My secretary gave me news about what had happened in the wild and sparsely inhabited country northwest of Jyekundo. The whole area, known as Changthang, is a vast plateau and exceedingly cold. Knowing

that the Communists were advancing from the northeast, the people of these high regions escaped to the northwest and lived in large camps. The Chinese now sent troops to attack them, having sighted their camps from their airplanes.

When the inhabitants left their villages, they had taken most of their cattle and personal possessions with them and this had made their camps very conspicuous targets for the Communist planes. Near the Lake of Heaven (Tengri Nor) there was a terrible fight; the refugees had camped beside this long lake which has a rocky mountain on one side; women and children were put behind these rocks for greater safety. The Communists attacked from three sides and the fighting went on for two days at the odds of 150 Tibetans against a thousand Communist troops. Though the situation was desperate the Tibetan men fought with such bravery that, despite many casualties, the women and children were saved.

All these things had happened while I was at Yak, but no one had been able to communicate with me at the time.

The bursar also told me that my mother and my two sisters had gone to visit my young brother, the abbot of Kyere, before the serious outbreak of hostilities and had stayed on there when conditions became dangerous. My mother sent me a message saying that she was relieved to think that I was in a safer place; I must not worry about her; if I had to leave the country she would be content for she thought only of my safety.

The refugees from the area around Surmang had been alloted camping sites and grazing for their cattle by the people living near Kyere; they still thought they would be able to return to their homes and our monks also expected to go back to Dütsi Tel; all thought that the Communists' threat to return would not be carried out. My bursar said he had done his best to encourage this belief. He had gone to Dütsi Tel himself with a few monks and found all the buildings intact, so he had arranged with some poor herdsmen still living in the neighborhood to take charge of them. At the monastery he had seen the desecrated tomb of the tenth Trungpa Tulku with the body exposed and on his return to Kyere had sent a party of monks to cremate it.

As soon as he got back to Kyere he had called a meeting of our monks; all agreed that they should return to their monastery and had written the letter which Bursar Tsethar had brought with him. It said

they hoped to resettle at Dütsi Tel and begged me to return to them; they asked me to think over the matter carefully, for if, during the life of the eleventh Trungpa Tulku, both monasteries ceased to function it would be a disaster. I asked the bursar how he had been able to travel the country in its present disturbed state; he replied that he had been aware of the danger and moved cautiously. I then asked him if other communities intended to return to their monasteries; to this he answered that, as far as he knew, no one else had such an intention. I wanted to know what were the individual opinions of my monks in regard to myself and he said that they were quite satisfied with the action I had taken to avoid danger; in fact, I had relieved them of the great responsibility of taking care of me.

It was difficult to reply to the letter, though it was obvious that decisions could not be long delayed; I used prasena again, which indicated that I should not go to Kyere and that I should even leave my present retreat fairly soon.

My answer to the letter was as follows: "We should not think only of the survival of our monastery, nor of my own reputation. You must see that the whole country has been devastated. If we try to reestablish Dütsi Tel the Communists will inevitably return and the suffering will only be repeated; probably we shall all lose our lives. Where I am now, we are in the province of Central Tibet; unless a change for the worse takes place here, we are in a better position than at Surmang. My monks must consider the possibility of remaining where they are or of coming to this area; I think nothing would be more dangerous than to return to Surmang."

I read my letter to the bursar and added, "I agreed earlier to return to Surmang, but this was in the hopes of saving our monastery. Now, if I join you, we will certainly be a target for attack from the Communists and their persecution of our people will begin all over again. They will believe that I encouraged the Resistance; this will only lead to further bloodshed. I think there is little hope of reestablishing our monastery, but I will not attempt to escape myself before I have received further information from our monks at Kyere."

The bursar had little to say in reply; incurably sanguine, he clung to the belief that everything would end well. He was obsessed with the calamity which had overtaken Surmang and failed to recognize the fact that the disaster was one involving the whole country. Though my com-

panions were in favor of my leaving the district immediately, we decided that I should stay on where I was until an answer came back from Kyere. As for Tsethar, he went to Drölma Lhakhang with the monk in charge of the horses to make arrangements about our animals which were being cared for in the neighborhood; he now wanted to exchange them for money and portable articles.

The weather was now improving and the valley where we were hiding was bursting into spring. Akong Tulku and I, sometimes accompanied by Jigme Rinpoche and his brother, used to take long walks along tracks that animals had made through the willow and juniper scrub. There was so much to see; birds, including the white goose, and many animals such as musk deer, brown bears, Tibetan pandas, and foxes were to be seen. To hear a fox barking is considered to be a bad omen in Tibet; one full-moon night after the New Year we heard one followed by the cries of jackals; the sound echoed from rock to rock and was frightening in the silence and loneliness of the valley.

The next day a messenger came to tell Jigme Rinpoche that his sister was dying; he and his brother left at once, saying that if his sister recovered he would return. A few days later he sent to tell us that his sister had died; her body had been cremated, but he would very much like me to perform the funeral rites. He said that on his return to his family's house he had realized how very cold we were in the Valley of Mystery and, since his house was a large one, he could hide me there without difficulty. He would let others know that he himself was engaged in special devotions and must remain in retreat, so no one would know that I was there. I was of course to travel by night; he also asked Akong to come with me. My attendant monk was delighted at this invitation, though he admitted he had made much progress in meditation in the solitude of the valley. I myself felt no inclination to go; we had grown fond of the place. I had been able to work a good deal, but had not finished a book I was writing on meditation, showing its gradual development up to the final fruition.

Jigme Rinpoche had been so exceedingly kind to us that I thought we must accept his invitation for a short time; we knew that his sister had been a nun and a very saintly woman. We asked the young monk who had come with us to the valley to look after our things; the landowner had sent an old nun to attend to the yaks, so he would not be left entirely

alone. As we started on our journey, I had a presentiment that we would not return to the valley that had sheltered us so well.

The snow on the pass was very deep and I had to walk behind my horse, holding on to its tail to pull me up the slope. On reaching the summit, we ran into a blizzard; the prayer flag on the cairn was all but torn away by the wind and only just showed above the deep snow. It was even more difficult going down the other side of the pass. I had to walk in front of my horse, holding on to the reins; the horse, being steadier than myself, was able to act as a brake in case I slipped. We traveled all through the day and reached the landowner's house toward evening; there we waited till it was quite dark. He himself wanted me to return at once to the shelter of the valley, for he thought there could be no safer hiding place from the Chinese. The night became colder and colder; it was pitch dark, but our guide knew the way and, hurrying along, we reached Jigme Rinpoche's house before the dawn broke.

The warmed rooms were welcome, though our frozen hands and feet tingled painfully; the contrast between our primitive life in the valley and the comfort of Jigme's house could hardly have been greater. It was a very quiet place; since the funeral rites were in progress no visitors called; but from the windows we could see the constant stream of Communist troops and lorries going along the road on the other side of the river.

This sudden change in our surroundings did not seem to suit my health, and after we had performed our devotions for a week, Akong Tulku's bursar arrived; he consulted with Jigme Rinpoche and they decided that, since I was not well, it would be unwise for me to undertake the strenuous return journey to the Valley of Mystery. They thought that there were equally good hiding places within easier reach. In fact, there was a cave I had long wanted to visit, so I asked them if they thought it would be suitable as a hiding place; to this proposal they agreed and said they would make the necessary arrangements.

Akong Rinpoche went home to his monastery and I left with my attendant for the cave, starting off at midnight; our guide was an elderly nun from one of the Drölma Lhakhang nunneries. As we could not reach the place before daybreak we rested on the way in another large cave on the south side of Mount Kulha Ngang Ya. The road ran beside the mountain, but the cave was so high up that we had to climb beyond a moraine to get to it. It had two divisions, an upper and a lower, we put our horses

in the lower one. We were not able to light fires for fear that they would give away our position, but we had plenty of dried meat and cheese with us, and our saddle rugs were useful for bedding. As soon as it became dark we resumed our journey; there were villages on the way and we passed by one of the local nunneries. Akong Tulku had arranged for some of his monks to get our cave ready, and when we reached it we found a fire already lit and food and bedding laid out.

The cave of my choice had been discovered by Lama Möntruk; his story is remarkable. He was born in the late nineteenth century in an area on the borders of Assam where the people believe in nature spirits, which they propitiate by animal sacrifices. This had distressed Möntruk from his early childhood and while still young he decided to leave his home. He pretended to be going on a hunting expedition and walked toward the Tibetan border; on his way there he came to the retreats of several Tibetan hermits. They told him about Thöga, a lama of Drölma Lhakhang, who had founded the four nunneries in that district. All he heard from the hermits encouraged him to seek out Thöga Rinpoche who became his guru.

After three years training under this master he undertook a long retreat and, being accustomed to climbing, he searched the nearby mountains for a suitable cave. Mount Kulha Ngang Ya seemed a good situation so, using a pickax, he started to hollow out a cave in the rock. After a day's work he had got through about a yard when he came to an opening into a natural cave with a hole in the roof that could serve as a chimney. A tunnel let to a second cavern, with a natural window looking out on a steep and inaccessible part of the mountain. Lama Möntruk remained there to meditate for the rest of his life.

We found the cave wonderfully warm; for fuel, we burnt a plant called *gongmo potho,* which grows in strange woolly clusters between the rocks; the nuns gathered it for us. A mountain stream ran nearby. This was an ideal place for working on my book, as there were no interruptions and no great hardship from the cold; the only drawback was that I had nowhere to walk so that I lacked exercise. The nun remained with my attendant, to cook and look after me; the two lived and slept in the front cave which was also our kitchen. After a week, however, I found the constant ministrations of the good nun somewhat distracting; I wanted to be left alone to meditate. When she told me about another cave some three hours' ride farther on, on Mount Kyo Rinchen Pungpa,

which with its surrounding villages was owned by her family, I sent word to Akong Tulku to have my horses brought to me and we moved on again.

When we reached this other mountain, we found the cave blocked. However, the owner very kindly provided a black tent, which was put up near the cave on a flat ledge high up the mountainside. This ledge was sufficiently large for me to walk about, so I could now again take exercise. There was a waterfall on one side, which at that time was frozen, and behind its icicles ran a clear passage through which I would walk out and up the rocks, with no danger of being seen from below. In the rarified air I could hear herdsmen in the distance calling to their animals. At night the cold was intense; several blankets and a well-made sheepskin coat imported from the west of Tibet did not suffice to keep me warm. My attendant found his native sheepskin and felt rugs better suited to this climate.

I remained there quietly for a few weeks and was able to finish my book, which filled about one thousand sheets of Tibetan paper. The landowner's herdsmen got to suspect, however, that there was a lama in retreat somewhere on the mountain. The rumor spread quickly to the neighboring village. All the inhabitants were very excited and thought it might possibly be me. The headman climbed up to our ledge to find out and when he saw me he used the Tibetan saying "A golden rock has fallen on our doorstep," adding that it was fortunate for him and his fellow villagers that I had come to their neighborhood. He was quite sure that the news of my whereabouts would go no further and that my retreat was as safe as any other hiding place; he assured me that all the villagers would look after me. He came again next day with his son and daughter-in-law bringing barrels of curd and other food supplies. He said that his wife would like to visit me on the following day; she had not been able to come with them as she had stayed at home to look after the house. The news that he brought about the present situation in the country was that the Resistance party was fighting in the area round Kongpo, where the Brahmaputra enters India. At Chamdo, the Chinese were becoming more and more oppressive; however, he thought that his part of Tibet was safe, and if I wanted to move from my present retreat, there were several equally good and remote places where I could lie concealed.

On April 11, at dawn, we heard neighing and the monk in charge of

my horses appeared. He told me that my bursar, who was still attending to the business of selling our cattle at Drölma Lhakhang, was growing increasingly worried about the situation. The Communist troops had now suddenly appeared in the vicinity, so he had sent this monk with my horses to ask what I thought should be done. The messenger had left the evening before and on his way had seen Communist troops marching toward Pashö. They were telling the people that the Chinese had already gained possession of Lhasa and that they were now about to take control of Pashö district. The troops were coming from different directions, some from Chamdo and others from Enda, north of Drölma Lhakhang. He did not know what had happened at the monastery or to Akong Tulku after he himself had left.

This news could mean one of two things; either the troops would go direct to Pashö or else they would attack each of the monasteries on the way. My takpa (divination) indicated that the danger was certainly increasing but that there was no need for immediate alarm. I realized that I could neither go to Drölma Lhakhang nor to Yak, so I sent the monk back to make preparations to move our luggage. He wanted to know the exact date on which he should be ready. I told him, at the full moon, on April 23. This was the Earth Hog year, 1959, and I was now twenty.

After he had left, a second monk came with a message from my bursar; Drölma Lhakhang had not been disturbed, for the Chinese had gone direct to Pashö. I went down to the nearby village, where I met a businessman who had come straight from Chamdo. He told me that the military had been in complete control there since the first week of April. They had put loudspeakers everywhere telling the people that the Dalai Lama had been forcibly abducted by the guerillas. They said that the Chinese had always intended to liberate the Tibetans and that they were there to bring great benefits to the people by peaceful means. They had, however, been forced to fire some guns in Lhasa when the guerillas attacked them and Norbulingkha, the Summer Palace, had been slightly damaged, but now everything was all right. They added that the Chinese had been obliged to take over the civil government because the Tibetans had broken the Seventeen Point Agreement of 1949; they also declared that Tibetans must not have any contact with the foreign "Imperialists."

My informant told me that Tibetan officials who up till now had worked with the Chinese were being arrested and all telephones in their

homes had been disconnected. Every bridge on the two Chamdo rivers was being guarded. The townspeople looked frightened and miserable and all gaiety was at an end. Everyone entering Chamdo was questioned as to his reasons for traveling. Part of the monastery was being used as a jail, though a few monks were allowed to remain in the rest of it; however, anyone visiting them was sighted through field glasses and accused of being a spy. The Communists had dug trenches on the hills round the town and it was estimated that some forty thousand troops were encamped in the vicinity. The Chinese had tried to encourage the Tibetans to return to their homes, telling them that there was nothing to fear and that everything that had taken place was to their advantage.

By April 14 the Chinese had gained complete control of Pashö. They had interned the lamas in the assembly hall of their monastery. The place was desecrated and everything of value removed. All the officials in the town had been captured and the food from the monastery and the government stores, as well as from the local shops, had been taken and sent away to Chamdo. A temporary concentration camp had been set up. The fact that Resistance forces under Andrup had previously visited Pashö now made things worse for the inhabitants. On their way to the town the Chinese had captured any travelers on the road and had forced them to accompany the army, so no one had been able to give any warning of their approach. Previously the Communists had not actually done any damage to the surrounding villages, but the people there were living in terror of spies who might give them away later.

THIRTEEN

Must We Escape?

WAITING FOR THE twenty-third, I went down to the village where I stayed with several families in succession. Yak Tulku came to see me, which was a great pleasure as he had always been so helpful with his mature advice and had shown such understanding about my difficulties at the time when the bursar was so insistent that I should go back to Surmang. This time, however, his mind was taken up with the Chinese situation; he seemed to be more nervous than I was myself and could give me no clear guidance. I told him that I had fixed the date for my departure; it was to be on April 23. He wanted to come with me, but said that he would have to bring some of the senior monks with him and also a good deal of baggage. We discussed the route and I pointed out to him that we might have great difficulty in crossing the Gyemo Ngül-chu River, for there was only one bridge, and at other places it was crossed by ferry. Since the Communists were in control at Pashö, they would probably have put guards all along the river. We had no knowledge of the conditions at the bridge. I tried to explain to Yak Tulku that this would not be an easy journey like the tours we used to make, this time it was going to be a life-or-death escape. We would have to reduce our baggage to a minimum and make ourselves as inconspicuous as possible. He still wanted to come with me, but felt he must first consult his secretary. He thought that the baggage question could be solved if he came with us on horseback with a few monks only bringing whatever was required for the journey; a small additional number of mules would suffice to carry the most valuable possessions, leaving a second party to

follow consisting of the other monks with yaks to transport the remainder of the baggage. However, he doubted whether he could make all these arrangements by the twenty-third. I emphasized that the party must be kept as small as possible, or there would be no chance for any of us. If many people wanted to try and escape, they must split up into smaller groups and travel separately. Whereupon Yak Tulku went back to his monastery to collect his party.

The monk horseman who had come to see me in my mountain retreat was now returning to Drölma Lhakhang. I gave him a letter to Akong Tulku telling him that I had decided to leave on the twenty-third and that, if he wanted to come with me, he must discuss the matter with his monks and come to an early and firm decision. I thought it unlikely that Drölma Lhakhang would be left in peace after what had happened in other parts of Tibet and particularly at Surmang. Should he come with me, I promised his monastery that I would do my best to look after him, but I realized that such a journey might be dangerous for both of us. My own date for departure was fixed and I had every intention of sticking to it. Yak Tulku might be coming with us and, if he decided to do so, I had told him that his baggage must be severely cut down. We should have to keep a small party; with every additional person the danger would become greater and my own responsibility would also be increased; moreover, there was always the possibility that others might wish to join us on the way; this was how I wrote to my friend Akong.

Until the 22nd I remained in the village and then set off at night for Drölma Lhakhang which I reached at six o'clock the next morning after a roundabout journey avoiding villages, while a tremendous snowstorm was raging. Both Akong Tulku and my bursar had tried to keep our plans secret, but the news of my intended departure had leaked out and on my arrival at the monastery I found a number of monks and villagers assembled who wanted to receive my blessing and to consult me about what they themselves should do. Some of them suggested organizing local resistance. I had very little time to talk to them and none to give any individual advice, so I spoke to the crowd in the assembly hall. I told them it would be useless to fight and, since I did not even know myself where I was going, I could offer them no concrete suggestions. At the moment I was thinking of Central Tibet; however, they must realize that there was danger everywhere. I told them to remember the teaching we

had shared during the wangkur. Before I said good-bye they all filed past me to receive a blessing, after which I left hastily for fear of further delays as more and more people were arriving.

Akong Rinpoche had decided to come with me with the approval of his monks, but my bursar had changed his mind; he could not bear to leave so many treasures behind while I, for my part, kept firmly to the decision to travel on horseback with a few mules to carry the basic necessities for the journey. It was arranged for a Lhathok woman to inform my monks at Kyere about my departure. After all this delay, our party could not even wait to have a meal, though my attendant and I had not eaten since the night before, so we set out on empty stomachs. Yönten came with us as acting bursar and the two attendants who had been with me in the Valley of Mystery were also of the party. Akong Rinpoche brought his two brothers and we were also joined by Lama Gelek, the monk who had taken the kalung when I gave the wangkur at Yak. A young novice from Drölma Lhakhang and an older monk from the retreat center also came with us. The older monk was a very spiritual man, prepared to face any difficulties and dangers.

We started with a tearful send-off from all the monks of the monastery. It was a desolate moment for Akong Tulku who was leaving his own monks, especially the senior ones, who had brought him up with such loving care. My bursar accompanied us as far as the nunnery which was to be our first stopping place. We had some thirty horses and fifty mules with us. The neighboring villages had been asked to watch out and report if any Communists were in the district.

On our arrival at the north nunnery I found the nuns very calm and thoughtful over the turn in affairs. They asked me to advise them what to do, saying they understood that they must accept whatever fate might bring. Some of the nearby villagers came to see me and we all talked for about an hour. As soon as there was a pause, the nuns offered us a meal which was very welcome. After we had eaten I went up to the hermitage and found the nun who was in retreat there. She was more concerned with my well-being than with her own personal danger. We had a spiritual talk and I encouraged her to consider the disturbances of this life as an element in her meditation.

Our party spent the night in the shelter of the nunnery and we talked until late in the evening. During the day all the baggage had had to be sorted and properly packed. No one except the nuns knew that we were

on our way to escape or for how long we would be staying at the nunnery; in fact, we disappeared after an early breakfast.

Not long after, we met a man who had just crossed the river by the bridge without meeting any Chinese; this was cheering news. The next night we stayed in an isolated house belonging to a celebrated doctor, who welcomed us warmly. He specialized in the use of herbal remedies and had several sheds where he kept a stock of local herbs together with other medicines imported from India. A wonderful meal was put before us, in which special spices were used to flavor dishes our host himself had invented. He was convinced that at the moment we had nothing to fear from the Communists. Next day he gave us detailed instructions about what food to eat or avoid on our journey, also telling us where the water was good, bad, or medicinal.

We set out very early in the morning; some of the neighboring villagers, however, had somehow got to know that we were in the district and came to ask for my blessing and also for advice and this delayed us somewhat. Our next stop was by a lake surrounded by five mountains, known as the Five Mothers; these had been held to be sacred by the followers of the old Bön religion. Here we had tea and then changed into ordinary Tibetan civilian clothes with European felt hats such as many people wear in Tibet. As I have mentioned before, such a change of clothes has a bad psychological effect on a monk, it gave one a sense of desolation.

Our track now led us over heights, with the land sloping down to a distant river. A message had been sent to Kino Monastery which lay some miles from the bridge, announcing our coming. On the way down we were overtaken by Akong's tutor from Drölma Lhakhang who had followed us to see that all was well with our party. A little farther on we met a traveler coming from the direction of the bridge; he too reassured us saying that there were no Chinese in the vicinity. Since the monks at Kino had been forewarned, they had prepared a small procession to welcome us at the entrance to the monastery. Its abbot was a married lama who lived outside the precincts but was still in charge of the community, while the khenpo (master of studies) lived within the monastery and acted as deputy abbot. Being received with all the traditional monastic ceremonial, I felt a sense of personal shame at appearing in lay dress. During our three days' stay there many people from surrounding villages came to ask for a blessing and to put their personal troubles before me.

We had to be particularly careful in this place since it lay near the bridge, so that there was always the possibility of the Communists coming this way, since Pashö lay only a few miles upstream, on the river Pashu which joined the Gyelmo Ngül-chu just above the bridge; this gave the place a certain strategic importance.

Kino Tulku and his wife now wanted to join our party. Unlike Yak Tulku, he was quite prepared to leave all his possessions behind. His wife came from near Drölma Lhakhang and they were both great friends of Akong Tulku. He said that since his friend was leaving and the situation with the Communists was becoming ever more menacing, he thought they should escape with us. He and his wife made immediate preparations for the journey and decided to bring with them two monk attendants, five horses, and eleven mules. A man with his wife and little daughter also asked if they could join us. They had sold up their home and bought three horses in addition to the two they already possessed.

According to information received locally, if we could cross the bridge the country on the farther side would be safe as it was under the administration of the Resistance. We made ready to go on and Akong's tutor returned to Drölma Lhakhang; he was in great distress over having to leave us for he realized that this was a complete separation from his beloved abbot.

We soon reached the Shabye Bridge which we crossed without difficulty; on the farther side we met a guard of the Resistance army who checked our party to ascertain that we were not carrying arms. One of my attendants was carrying a rolled-up pictorial scroll over his shoulder and the guard thought it looked suspiciously like a gun! When we had been cleared we were given passports. We enquired what steps were being taken to protect the area and were told that the whole district was being guarded and they thought that the Communists would not be able to break into it. He was very optimistic and said that the Resistance was even preparing to attack. We told him that the Communists had spread a report that the guerillas forced His Holiness the Dalai Lama to leave Lhasa early in March and that he had escaped and was now in India; also that Lhasa was now entirely under Communist control, though we ourselves did not believe this to be true. The guard likewise thought that this report was merely Chinese propaganda. Most of our companions were greatly cheered and muttered among themselves that such tales as these were not to be taken too seriously.

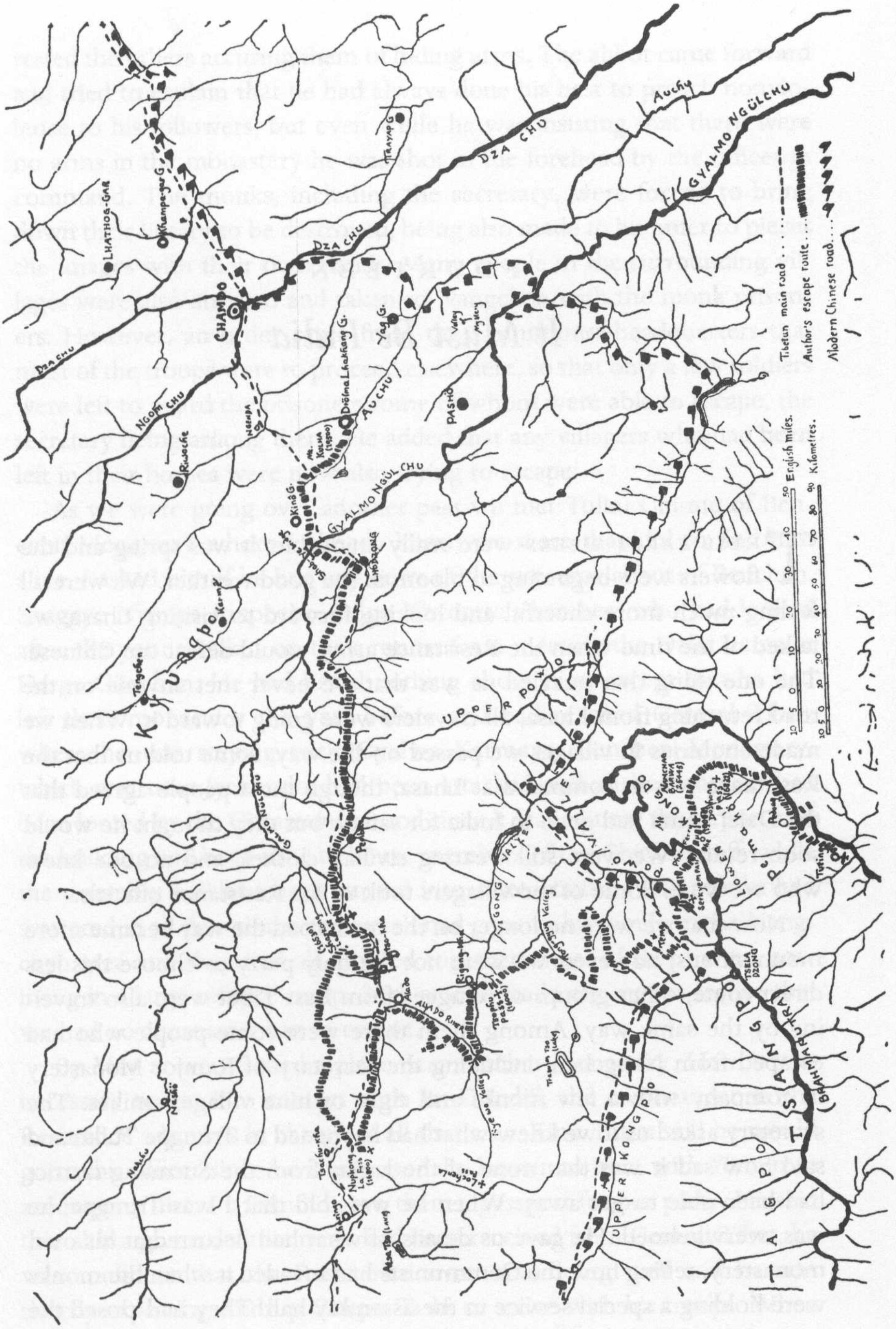
All the party felt relief at not being in immediate danger. We stayed the night in a house in the village and Kino Tulku's monks returned to their monastery. The next day, getting up very early before sunrise, we started off to cross a high mountain range by a very steep zigzag track; our animals had to stop frequently to regain their breath; we met some of the Resistance soldiers coming down it. At the top we saw stone defense works which had been built on both sides of the road. Some of the soldiers came from the Lhathok district and among them was a doctor who knew me. He told me that he had left his home as a pilgrim and had joined the Resistance army in Lhasa before the crisis. All the soldiers were tall, well–set-up men and looked very warlike; most of them carried rifles but a few only possessed old-fashioned muskets. The young soldiers seemed enthusiastic and proud to wear their military medals hung on yellow ribbons, inscribed with the words *National Resistance Volunteers;* they were all singing songs and looked very cheerful. My personal attendant Karma Ngödrup, who had a simple optimistic nature, was much impressed with them; he said he felt sure that the Tibetans would get the better of the Chinese for, according to the law of karma, we who had never molested other countries must now surely deserve the victory.

On the farther side of the mountain we stopped and spent the night in tents, and the following day we reached Lhodzong, where we met a man from Kino who was partly in charge of the Resistance troops. He told me his story, how he had met the commander Andrup Gönpo Tashi, who had impressed him as being a man of outstanding character; he thought that with such a leader directing their forces, the Resistance must be successful. My informant had been a senior official with the Riwoche administration and had been held in the greatest respect by everyone in the area. Kino Tulku wished us to consult him about our escape plans but, when we did so, he was unable to give us any useful advice; and in fact, he only expressed the opinion that it was unnecessary for us to leave the country.

Reaching Shi-tram Monastery, we found the monks there quite calm and engaged on their ordinary routine, but beyond that point we began to meet with difficulties. On the main road to Lhasa there were so many Resistance soldiers going in both directions, that very little grazing was available, added to which we found all provisions very expensive. We decided therefore to bypass the main road and follow a more round-

about track which brought us near the home of some of Kino Tulku's friends with whom we stayed for several days. The young abbot of Sephu, who had been one of my pupils at the wangkur, came to see us while we were there. He wanted to join our party with his mother, his tutor, and several monks. I explained to the tutor that this escape was likely to be a difficult business; we did not yet know where to go, there was so much uncertainty about what had happened at Lhasa itself; therefore I advised him to think things over carefully before deciding whether to join us or not. Supposing that the monks of his monastery wished to come with him, this would make further difficulties and would endanger the whole party. When ten of us left Drölma Lhakhang it had been unanimously agreed that the party should be kept small; but already we had been joined by other people together with their baggage. The next morning the tutor came back to tell us that his abbot, who was in a great state of excitement, was determined to come with us. He had sent a message to his monks telling them that he had decided to escape but that, since I had insisted that it would be impossible to travel in a large group, they must understand that they could not come with him. When the young abbot joined us he brought about twenty more mules to add to our transport. After several more days on the road we came across Ugyen Tendzin, a young monk going on pilgrimage to Lhasa. He also asked to join us, and Kino Tulku told him that he could put his baggage on one of his own mules. We found him most helpful with loading and unloading the animals, and afterward, at critical moments of the journey, he proved an invaluable member of our party, full of resource and courage.

Opposite: The author's escape route.



DZA CHU
GYALMO NGÜLCHU
Auchu
CHAMDO
LHATHOG-GAR
NGOM CHU
AUCHU
DASHO
GYALMO NGÜL CHU
UPPER PO
SANGPO
BRAHMAPUTRA
Tibetan main road
Author's escape route
Modern Chinese road
English miles
Kilometres

FOURTEEN

It Must Be India

THESE EARLY WEEKS were really enjoyable; it was spring and the flowers were beginning to bloom in the good weather. We were all feeling much more cheerful and looking forward to visiting Lhasa; we talked of the time when the Resistance army would defeat the Chinese. The one thing that puzzled us was that we never met anyone on the road returning from Lhasa, all travelers were going toward it. When we made enquiries in villages we passed on the way, some told us that the Resistance was in command at Lhasa, though most people agreed that the Dalai Lama had gone to India for safety, but they thought he would soon return. We were still wearing civilian clothes, and no one knew who we were. Some of the villagers took us for Resistance officials.

Now that we were no longer on the main road the way became more mountainous; however, we were not the only party to choose this less direct route, other groups of refugees from East Tibet were also traveling by the same way. Among them there were some people who had escaped from Nangchen, including the secretary of Ramjor Monastery in company with a few monks and eight or nine village families. The secretary asked us if we knew what had happened to Trungpa Tulku and said how sad it was that none of the lamas from the Surmang district had been able to get away: When he was told that I was Trungpa, he was overwhelmed. He gave us details of what had occurred at his own monastery, telling how the Communists had invaded it when the monks were holding a special service in the assembly hall. They had closed the entrance and had immediately shot a few monks, after which they ar-

rested the others accusing them of hiding arms. The abbot came forward and tried to explain that he had always done his best to preach nonviolence to his followers, but even while he was insisting that there were no arms in the monastery he was shot in the forehead by the officer in command. The monks, including the secretary, were forced to bring down their library to be destroyed, being also made to hammer to pieces the images with their own hands. Many people in the surrounding villages were also arrested and taken to Nangchen with the monk prisoners. However, an order came from the Communist headquarters that most of the troops were to proceed elsewhere, so that only a few soldiers were left to guard the prisoners some of whom were able to escape, the secretary being among them. He added that any villagers who had been left in their homes were now also trying to escape.

As we were going over another pass we met Tulku Chi-me of Benchen Monastery whom I already knew; we were thankful to find him alive. I asked him if he had any news of the supreme abbot of Benchen, Sanggye Nyenpa Rinpoche, Dilgo Khyentse's brother, who had looked after the young tulkus on their return from meeting the Dalai Lama at Derge Gönchen. He had heard nothing about him, except that he had left their monastery the year before and had reached Central Tibet, where he was staying with Gyalwa Karmapa. Benchen Monastery, which was near Jyekundo, had been attacked and all its treasures had been looted by the Communists; and since it was so near the airport half the building had been used to house members of the Chinese staff, while the assembly hall had been turned into a storehouse. The monks had scattered in all directions; he himself had gone to his family in the Nangchen area and they had all escaped together; most of them were now living in a large refugee camp. Such stories made my monks realize that we had no alternative but to escape.

By May 21 we reached a place near Pembar Monastery. Here it was necessary to get into contact with Pu Dündül, the commander in the Resistance who was in charge of all that area. Kino Tulku said he would go to this officer since he was personally known to him, with Yönten to accompany him. Pu Dündül gave them a passport for our party. He said that although no definite news had been received from Central Tibet, he was confident that the Resistance army was doing well and he was shortly expecting Andrup Gönpo Tashi to arrive with his troops. When he discovered that the young abbot of Sephu was with us, he said that no



Dorje Tsering, district official.



Yönten, a Surmang monk.

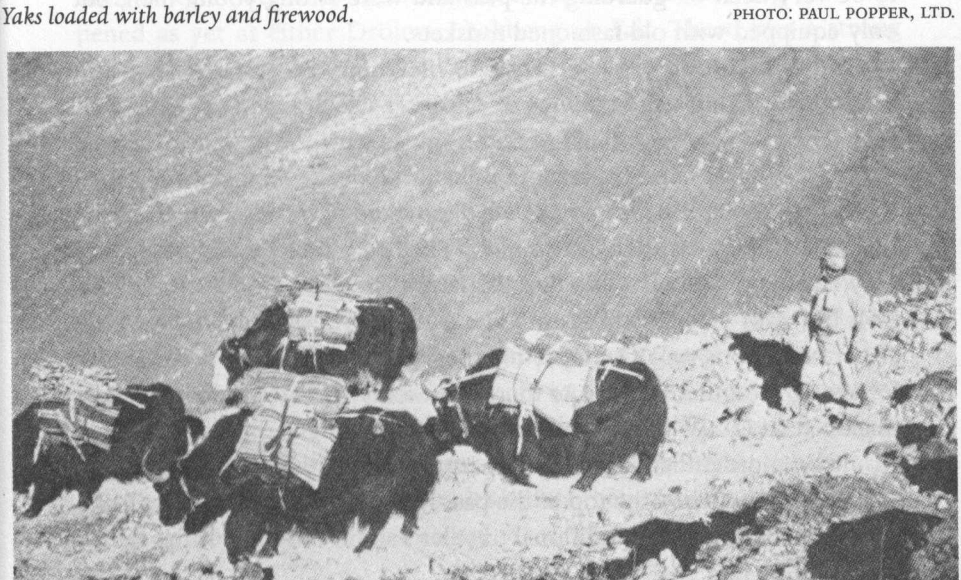
The king of Derge's cabinet.





A Resistance Khampa. PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.

Yaks loaded with barley and firewood. PHOTO: PAUL POPPER, LTD.



one from his district could be allowed to leave; everyone must remain in the area to fight. The following day the abbot's tutor went to see him and begged him to allow the boy to escape, but he would not hear of it, so we had to leave the unfortunate young abbot and his companions behind.

It was now necessary for us to regain the high road, as there was no other pass across the mountains, and we arrived at a place called Ugyen Tamda. There was a small temple in this village which was famous because it held an image of Ugyen Rinpoche otherwise known as Guru Padmasambhava, the apostle of Tibet; we held a special service there as it was the tenth day of the month according to the Tibetan calendar, which is the particular day for these devotions. We were also shown Tsongpön Norbu Sangpo's saddle and a Tibetan version of the Chinese *Book of Changes (I Ching)* which had belonged to him. He was a merchant who lived in the seventh century and his name was still honored, for he was a very spiritual man, besides having compiled the first written record of Tibet's trade with other countries.

Ahead of us lay the very high pass of Sharkong La; it was extremely steep and the weather was very stormy, so when we had got about halfway up we camped for the night. Several Resistance soldiers who were guarding the pass came down to us to beg for food and transport. We gave them some food but said we had no animals to spare. They seemed to be very keen on guarding the pass and were strong young men, but only equipped with old-fashioned muskets.

The next morning we returned to the climb; the weather was still bad, with a strong wind blowing in our faces which made progress difficult. The baggage kept falling off the mules and we all had to help in getting the loads settled again and this caused delays. Three young men came down from the pass whom we discovered to be deserters from the Resistance army on their way home. They said that the Chinese were very strong in Central Tibet and Lhasa itself might be under their control, but they had no firsthand information. They could tell us little about conditions on our route, for they had traveled mostly by night, following mountain tracks. As there were only three of them, they had managed to escape detection; they said they thought that concealment would be more difficult for a large party like ours.

When we reached the top of the pass I, Kino Tulku, and Akong Tulku dismounted to give the traditional traveler's shout of victory, after which

we duly added a flag to the cairn. Meanwhile, the rest of the party had gone ahead. The track on the further slope was very steep and covered with fine slate dust which made it extremely slippery, so we dismounted and this greatly delayed our reaching the next camp. When we got there tea was ready and our tents were pitched; it was pleasant to chat over a warming cup of tea. Some of our party thought that since the three soldiers had deserted, they might be feeling a little guilty and thus have been led to exaggerate about the hopelessness of the situation. They had been so vague about everything, it appeared that they really knew very little. We came to no decision about our plans, but felt a little uneasy because of the fact that no one was traveling toward Lhasa on this main road.

It began to rain heavily, so we decided to remain encamped during the next day; early in the morning, while we were sitting in camp, some men on horseback were seen coming toward us. They were wearing dark clothes and some of them were carrying rifles. Great was our surprise when they turned out to be Yak Tulku with his devotee Dorje Tsering, the head of the district around Yak, whose wife, brother, and two attendants had also accompanied him. As we drank tea Yak Tulku told us that his baggage was following on some sixty mules; he and his party had hastened on ahead to ask us to wait for it to arrive. He gave us the serious news that Pashö had been completely overrun and that conditions at Chamdo were extremely bad. He said that nothing had happened as yet at either Drölma Lhakhang or Yak. There was a strong Resistance force in the Trayap district who had cut the road when the Communists were taking lorries full of loot from Pashö to Chamdo and thus they had succeeded in recovering much of the stuff.

I was delighted to see Yak Tulku again, but realized that his arrival could only mean further difficulties for us all since he had not followed my request to travel lightly; to add to my anxiety, he told me that yet another party was on its way with more baggage loaded on yaks which go very slowly. The exit from Yak had been so public that all the villagers around that place and Drölma Lhakhang had begun to panic. They thought that if all their spiritual directors were leaving there was nothing left for them but to follow; a large party had started and was now also on its way. Yak Tulku sent a message to tell those of his monks who were in charge of the baggage mules where they could find us and again he asked me to wait for their arrival. This obliged us to stay in the same

camp for several days, during which time some of the local villagers came to see us thinking that we were Resistance troops. They brought food as an offering to the soldiers and were surprised when we offered to pay for it. Knowing the surrounding country they were able to tell us where we could find grazing for our many animals.

When Yak Tulku's mules arrived we decided to stay where we were for another day or two to concert our plans. Looking at the camp, it appeared enormous and I wondered how we would ever manage to escape with so many men and animals. We had to push on, and on our way down all we could see were endless ranges of mountains stretching out before us. After a couple of days we came to a place called Langtso Kha where we camped by a small lake surrounded by rocky hills. We were told that Resistance troops from Central Tibet had already arrived at a nearby village, which meant additional complications for us, for at this point the valley entered a steep gorge where perpendicular rocks in places went right down to the river, so that the track could not be carried further on the same side of the water and travelers had to get across to the opposite side. For this primitive bridges had been built. Even then, there were parts of the gorge which were so steep that no path could run alongside the river; in these places the pathway had been taken over the rocks and, wherever it was blocked by impassable rock faces, platforms made of planks had been built around the obstacle, these being supported on posts fixed into the cliff below. We were not sure if these would be strong enough for heavy loads such as ours and the road all along was so narrow that it was evident that, if we happened to meet Resistance troops coming from the opposite direction, neither party would be able to pass. However, we could not stay by the lake because of the difficulty of finding grazing for our many animals, for what little there was was needed for the Resistance army.

We sent some messengers ahead to enquire if further troops were to be expected; they were told that at the moment there was a lull, but more men were expected shortly, and some important leaders had already arrived. Yönten and Dorje Tsering went down to the village to buy supplies and to see the officer in command. He told them that fighting was going on in several places, but did not mention Lhasa. He also said that he was expecting more troops at any moment. He had found the bridges across the river and the platforms on the road were in very bad condition and was arranging for their repair. There was nothing for



Bridge over the Alado Gorge.

us to do except to wait where we were. Meanwhile the weather had improved; I had my books with me so I started a study group. Having finished the book on meditation, I began to work on an allegory about the kingdom of Shambhala and its ruler who will liberate mankind at the end of the dark age.

Akong Tulku with his young brother and myself used to go for delightful climbs on the surrounding mountains which were covered with flowers. The local landowner proved very friendly; he frequently invited the senior members of our party to meals and allowed us to graze our animals on his land; also peasants came to see us and sold us some food. One day Karma Tendzin came through with his detachment; they were returning from Lhasa after its fall to the Chinese. We had known for a long time that he had left his home to join the Resistance. Numbers of refugees were coming back along the road together with the soldiers, and we realized that it would be impossible for us to travel against the traffic. Some of the refugees came and camped near us by the lake. They told us all sorts of rumors; some said that the Dalai Lama had come back, others, that the Chinese troops were advancing toward our area. With such crowds of people escaping, there was a growing shortage of food and grazing, and our friend the landowner and the neighboring villagers were getting very anxious about it. In comparison with these hordes our party seemed quite small. We knew, however, that we must make plans to move elsewhere, and learned that if we retraced our steps we could follow another valley going northwestward. So we thanked the landowner for all his kindness and broke camp.

It was now early June. We traveled for about a week; each day we had to cross a high pass. One day, we passed a man who came from Lhathok, he told us that he had escaped with some nine families, with one Repön as leader. They had brought all their possessions and animals with them and had established themselves in a small valley nearby, where the country was very open with good grazing. The following day they all came to see us bringing barrels of curd, cheeses, and fresh milk which we much appreciated, for on our travels we had had all too few milk products. They suggested that they might follow us, but when they realized that we ourselves did not know where we were going, they thought that they also should make no plans for the time being. I gave them my blessing and we moved on. The next day we came to Khamdo Kartop's camp; he had been one of the king of Derge's ministers, and

was a follower of Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen; he had some forty families with him. He told us how his party had fought their way westward in spite of having women and children with them. Their young men were strong and experienced; they had been successful at Kongpo and had captured some of the Communists' ammunition. Now they were in the same position as ourselves, not knowing where to make for. Khamdo Kartop had the same views as myself, he did not want to be responsible for looking after other refugee parties. He knew that there was no chance of going toward Lhasa since the main road was strictly guarded and said he thought that the Resistance army still had their headquarters at Lho Kha; they had fought with great bravery in Central Tibet, but had too few men and very little ammunition. He had heard that Andrup Gönpo Tashi had gone to India and, like myself, he was sure that we must all try to get there. In any case we could not stay where we were, on the border of the territory controlled by the Resistance.

I returned to our camp to hear the news that Lama Ugyen Rinpoche was leading a party of refugees from the east in the hopes of reaching India. He was going south by a holy mountain which was a place of pilgrimage. Kino Tulku knew all about the country there and thought that it might be a good plan to go toward India by the Powo Valley. We held a meeting in the camp to discuss the situation. Some thought that we should join up with Khando Kartop's party, but none of us were in favor of fighting, so this did not seem to be a very sensible move. Others suggested that we should follow Lama Ugyen. However, our party for the most part wanted to keep separate, for if we joined with other groups our numbers would become dangerously large. Since we knew that we could not stay where we were, I decided that we must continue southward at least for a few months, and by that time we would know more about the state of affairs in Tibet; refugees were coming in from all directions and we would soon learn what was happening everywhere. I sent Dorje Tsering to inform Khando Kartop of our plans. I said that in the future we might wish to cooperate, but for the present I had decided to act on my own.

A further three monks had joined our party; they had no transport and Yak Tulku took them on to help him. Before we left, Repön, who was directing the refugee encampment, sent his son to have a further talk with me. His group thought that they should sell some of their things to buy horses and then join my party. He wanted to know what

we had decided to do and if I would allow them to come with us. I told him that we were still uncertain about everything and that each day things were becoming more complicated. He replied that even so they all intended to follow us. I advised him not to part with his animals, or to follow us too soon, because all the routes were overcrowded with refugees and we might not be able to get through. However, they went on getting rid of their possessions.

Some soldiers came along who had escaped from Norbu Lingka, the Dalai Lama's summer residence outside Lhasa; they gave us a graphic account of what had happened there. They had witnessed the Chinese shelling the building and seen some of their fellow soldiers killed. No one knew whether the Dalai Lama was still within the walls; there was, however, a suspicion that he had escaped. They had also seen the Potala being shelled; the bombardment had begun at a signal from a Communist gun. After the attacks on the Norbu Lingka and the Potala there was no possibility of further fighting, for the Chinese had taken up positions in big houses in the town and were firing from them. It was obvious that all this had been prepared for some months previously. These men had escaped, but a number of Resistance soldiers would not leave the place and they had all been massacred.

Another man told me how he had left Jyekundo with a large group of refugees. They had reached a place halfway to Lhasa in the flat country round Changthang when they were sighted by Chinese airplanes and Communist patrols attacked them from all directions. The fighting was severe; among others the abbot of Jyekundo Monastery was shot and all the wounded were left to die, while the survivors from the battle starved to death as the Communists had taken all their food and possessions. The refugees had, however, actually succeeded in shooting down one of the enemy planes. There were many different groups of refugees all around that area, and the Chinese were everywhere. My informant's particular camp had been attacked seventeen times. On one occasion, when the group was trying to go forward and most of the men had gone ahead to secure a passage through the surrounding Communist troops leaving the women and children in the camp to follow after them, a husband and his wife had put their three young sons, aged between eleven and eight, on their horses, and while they themselves were saddling their own animals the boys' horses took fright and bolted. The parents took it for granted that the horses were following others leaving

the camp, so went on themselves to the agreed camping ground; however, on reaching it there was no sign of the children and the mother in despair jumped into the river.

The man who spoke to me had witnessed the whole tragedy and went on to tell me how several days later when he was scouting round he had discovered the three boys sheltering from the rain, under a rock; two of their horses were nearby, the third was dead and the children were starving. The eldest boy had tried to cut out some of the dead horse's flesh, but his small knife had been useless for the task. The children asked him where their mother was. Since another attack from the enemy was expected at any moment, the man could not take the children with him; however, he managed to arrange with some nearby herdsmen to look after them. He had later met their father in Lhasa and told him how he had found the boys.

One important piece of news reached us about that time: We were told that Gyalwa Karmapa had left his monastery some weeks before the fall of Lhasa, with Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and his brother and the newly found incarnation of Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung, who was still an infant, also the young Tai Situ abbot of Palpung; many abbots and lamas had traveled with them. They had gone through Bhutan to India and had been able to take some of their possessions with them. This news left my monks in no further doubt that we too must face the hardships of escape. They could not, however, understand why, if Gyalwa Karmapa had arranged to escape himself, he had given no indication of his plans when I wrote to him from Drölma Lhakhang. I explained to them that none of us could advise others in such a situation; I was in the same difficulty myself when asked for my advice, since I did not even know where our own party could find refuge.

Some of the troops who were passing through told us enthralling stories; the Resistance soldiers who had fought at Kongpo had been very brave, but they had been forced to retreat, for they could do nothing against the superior arms of the Chinese; their spirit was still unbroken and they were ready to carry on the fight at any time.

We now made our way across a range of mountains in a southwesterly direction and after negotiating the high pass of Nupkong La we reached the China-to-Lhasa main road in front of the bridge at the western end of the dangerous passage through the gorge which we had not dared to attempt before. There were many refugees going the same way.

We camped in a small field from where we could see the road. I was apprehensive and scanned it carefully through field glasses: It certainly looked impossible; however, when I saw a man with some baggage mules going across it, I thought it might be feasible. We asked some villagers for their help with our animals and started off at daybreak the following morning. Fortunately no one was coming from the opposite direction. We found that as long as the animals were left to themselves they were all right; we were able to reach the last bridge safely about noon and stopped at the first small camping ground beyond it, for with so many refugees on the way, we thought we might have difficulty in finding another suitable place.

Nearby, we met a number of monks from Kamtrül Rinpoche's monastery of Khampa Gar, among them the same Genchung Lama who had served as chöpön (director of rites) for the wangkur at Yak; with him he had his sister who was a nun, and there were also a number of villagers in his party. The monks gave me a distressing account of how their monastery had been invaded by the Communists. They had all been imprisoned and the senior lamas shot one after another. Only a very few monks had escaped from the monastery itself, the party on the road having mostly come from the retreat center; it was sad to see how, after so many peaceful years of monastic life, they now found themselves in this tragic position. They were, however, enormously thankful that their abbot had been able to escape to India. I was a little afraid that they would want to join us, for our party was already far too numerous; before they could suggest anything, I hinted that we had no set plans ourselves; I said we had already been forced to change plans suddenly several times. However, they decided to try to get to India from the west side of the gorge. Only the chöpön and his sister asked to come with us; they each had a horse and some mules for their baggage.

FIFTEEN

Refugees on the Move

WE TRAVELED EASTWARD along the main road to Alado where there is a junction of two rivers; we followed the southern one for a few miles and turned into a valley on its west side. It was much warmer here; the country was green and covered with trees of the holly family as well as bamboos. This valley was thronged with refugees going the same way; when we asked them where they were going to, they said that they were just following the people in front of them. With all these animals on the road there was less and less grazing available; we passed the carcasses of many beasts which had died on the road and they made the air putrid. When we camped it was difficult to find a clean spot; all possible sites were so crowded that there was hardly enough space to stretch the tent ropes. Many of the refugees wanted to consult me; they thought that a party like ours must have a plan. The only answer I could give them was that I had no clearer ideas than themselves; we were simply all going in the same direction. The lamas among the crowds continued to carry on their devotions, and the valley echoed with the sounds of their chanting, their drums, and other musical instruments. The people were wonderfully cheerful, they laughed and joked and sang among themselves. We went on like this for several days. The queen of Nangchen and some of her ministers were in a large group among the refugees; she was still cheerful and welcomed me warmly as we exchanged white scarves. She was a little disturbed about the direction that we were all following and had sent several messengers to different places to make enquiries about alternative routes; none of them had returned. A steep

and very high pass lay in front of us which was still under snow. It was a strange sight to watch this dark stream of people looking like a black ribbon stretched over the white landscape of the pass. I walked beside the queen and was surprised to see how tough she was; she preferred to go on foot through the snow rather than to ride. After crossing the pass we went down to a series of valleys; there was more room here for camping and we were no longer distressed by the proximity of dead animals. We followed the valleys circling between the hills; the queen decided to stay with her party in one of the smaller ones, but all the rest of us went on. When we thought that we had crossed the last pass on our route we discovered on the following day that there was an even steeper one rising ahead of us. The road leading up to it was so dangerous that one of our horses with its load fell over the precipice and we were not able to recover anything. At the top we found there was a broad plateau where we could all camp. Karma Tendzin was already there; he was recruiting all the able-bodied men among the refugees for the Resistance army. Lama Ugyen Rinpoche was also camping there with a party of monks; I had not met him before although I had heard a great deal about him, for he was a disciple of my predecessor and also a great friend of Gyalwa Karmapa who used often to consult him on specially perplexing questions. He was an old man and considered it his duty to give advice to a young person like myself. He told me not to go to India but to stay where I was; he thought it strange that I had such a large following. I had to explain to him who everybody was and how some of us had met at the wangkur which I had given at Yak. I said that we all had made up our minds to try to get to India; he was very firm that I should not go with the others, though my friends could do as they liked, and added that this was a request as well as an order. I asked him various questions about Gyalwa Karmapa and my other friends in Central Tibet. He himself could easily have gone with them, but he had not wished to do so. I wanted to know if he thought that it would ever be necessary for him to escape to India and he replied that he thought the time might come, though he was quite sure that this should not be attempted at present, for there was certain to be a lull before such a step would become imperative. He added, "This plateau and all the valleys below it are holy places of pilgrimage. We should all join together here in meditation to gain spiritual strength so that we may carry on with our normal duties."

Karma Tendzin, the guerilla captain, had his son with him on the plateau; he was not thinking of going to India at that time, being entirely intent upon the work of the Resistance. He could give me no suggestions about what route we should follow or even about the advisability of our attempting to escape or not. On the plateau there was an acute shortage of food, grazing, and space. I pointed out to him that he was the only person who could deal with the situation and direct these vast crowds to spread themselves in different parts of the country. It was impossible for the local inhabitants round here to provide necessities for so many people. He agreed that this should be done; however, he felt that he must first get the able-bodied refugees and the local men to join the Resistance forces. I told him how Pu Dündül was organizing local groups and not allowing anyone who could fight to leave his district. Throughout our travels we had found that in all the villages the men were eager to join in the fighting against the Communists.

A further influx of refugees arrived on the plateau. They had traveled quickly, having little baggage, and had passed a large party coming from Drölma Lhakhang and Yak traveling in a group with Jigme Rinpoche and my bursar who were bringing the heavy baggage loaded on yaks. This group had crossed the Shabye Bridge and had arrived at Lhodzong where they were stopping since they were now uncertain whether or not to continue their journey in view of the fact that the situation around Drölma Lhakhang and Yak seemed to have quieted down. At the same time a messenger came from Kino Tulku's monastery to tell him that all was quiet there. My own party had again been growing restless, feeling that perhaps our flight into the unknown had been unnecessary. This led to a long discussion, since it seemed as if Lama Ugyen's advice might after all be right, in which case should we not delay trying to go to India and wait for a lull in the hostilities? In the meantime, I made enquiries from the local people about the country around and about what mountain tracks we would have to follow if we decided to continue on our way to India. They all told me that it would be impossible to travel by the valleys or to cross the mountain ranges at this time of year, for all the rivers would be in spate; which meant in effect that we would have to remain where we were. I myself was quite determined that as soon as it was possible we should carry out our plan to escape. I felt I must inform the party at Lhodzong of what we intended doing; Akong Tulku's elder brother and one of Kino Tulku's monks volunteered to take

the message. In my letter I said that in any case we intended to make for India; there was no question of turning back. Lama Ugyen, however, took it for granted that we were following his advice and not immediately leaving the plateau, so he urged us to make a pilgrimage to the holy places in the nearby valley and even named a date for us to go there. We were a little doubtful whether it would be possible to cross the high mountain pass which lay in the way and I thought the wisest plan would be for only three of us, namely myself, Akong Tulku, and one monk, to make the attempt under Lama Ugyen's leadership. When we joined him he asked where were the rest of our party, for he had been very excited at the prospect of conducting our whole group, animals included. I explained to him that the others had not come because we thought there might be difficulties in crossing the pass. Actually when our small party reached it the snow was so deep that we found it impossible to get through.

Most of the refugees had by now gone on to the Nyewo Valley, so the plateau was no longer so crowded. We decided to move to its farther end to a level spot near a lake. Yönten went to Nyewo to get provisions, but found a scarcity there and this made us realize that we must eke out our provisions and rely for the most part on *tsampa* and wild vegetables. Karma Tendzin was also staying at this end of the plateau; he had a battery radio with him and we used to listen in to the news both from Peking and Delhi broadcast in Tibetan. The Peking program was full of propaganda saying how wicked the uprising had been, when the Chinese had only come to Tibet to liberate its people; however, they had now settled all the disturbances and there were very few Resistance troops left in Tibet. The broadcast from Delhi said that the Dalai Lama was already in Mussoorie.

It was a surprise one day when Repön's son suddenly appeared at our camp. His father had sent him on ahead to tell me that they had sold most of their possessions and animals and had bought extra arms and ammunition from fellow refugees. They had got past the gorge with its difficult piece of road, had crossed the bridge, and were now on the track leading southward where they were waiting until the son could scout out the route ahead and see what camping grounds and grazing were available. I told him all I knew and he went back.

A number of senior lamas had now also arrived on the plateau, having traveled with various groups of refugees. Lama Ugyen thought it

would be a good plan if they, together with our party, were to cross the holy mountain to a small valley beyond it, which was in the heart of the pilgrimage country. The local people had suggested to him that the pass could be crossed if they sent unloaded yaks first to tread down the snow, and they had offered to help him in this way. On studying this plan, however, I saw that the valley in question was extremely small; there would be no room for such a large party and the conditions would be so crowded that we should fare even worse than before. I did not want to offend Lama Ugyen so I told him that if the yaks cleared the way, there was no need for us all to go together, my party could follow later. I would let him know if we decided to go first to Nyewo Valley. His party made three attempts with yaks, and the third time they were able to cross the pass. I would certainly have liked to have gone on pilgrimage to these holy places and also to have further talks with Lama Ugyen, but there was no further opportunity to do so. We heard later that when his party reached the valley they found it was so narrow that there was not enough room for them; moreover it was a highly dangerous place where rock falls were frequent and in fact some of their horses were killed by falling stones. Meanwhile Yönten sent some food to us from Nyewo, but stayed on there himself hoping to buy further supplies.

After the talks I had had with Lama Ugyen, I realized how important it was for me to go into retreat for a short time to renew my strength. In any case I thought that we should move nearer to Nyewo and hoped I might find a suitable place for a retreat while on the way there. Climbing down from the plateau we crossed the river below it. We now had to go up a steep zigzag track which led across a pass in a high mountain range. It was dangerously slippery, for here all the ground was covered with a white slimy mud with no vegetation. Had an animal slipped, it would have crashed down on the people behind. The top of the pass was like a knife edge; however, it was easier going down on the other side, where there were trees and undergrowth. We came to a nice little open valley which seemed a good place for a camp; a few refugees were already there at the farther end. In this quiet spot I was even able to go on with my writing; however, the peace did not last for long, for all Repön's party soon arrived on the scene. They were very considerate and put up their camp about a mile away from ours. A few refugees were passing through who told me that Bursar Tsethar's party were

close behind on their way to join us. Akong Tulku and I walked round the surrounding country until we found a suitable place where one could go into retreat; it was less than a mile from our camp in a wooded spot. It was agreed that visitors could come for an hour in the morning and for a couple of hours in the afternoon if they would bring me some food; I could make my own fires. I took with me my tent, a small shrine, and some books. Here it was possible to relax after so much turmoil, thus gaining spiritual strength in order to face whatever lay ahead.

The first few days I heard some strange animal noises round the tent at night and felt a little uneasy; however, I soon found that these visitors were not dangerous. This part of the country was very different to my part of Tibet; it was warmer and there was a much greater variety of trees and plants and many more animals and birds. The moonlight shone through the trees forming a shadow like lacework on the tent.

One morning, Karma Ngödrup came to see me; he was breathless with excitement telling me that large brown bears had come in the night and had attacked our horses and mules. They had killed one horse and mauled several others; they were returning every night. Several days after this he found a bear's footprints just outside my tent; others of our party also came to implore me to leave my retreat but I had no fear myself and stayed on where I was. One is ever in the grip of the law of karma, so it is senseless to worry overmuch.

Some days later we received an alarming message from Yönten stating that the Communists were coming through the Nyewo Valley; the refugees were all in a panic trying to find hiding places. I still thought we might stay where we were for a further day, since if the Communists should come there was nothing we could do anyway. The following day another messenger arrived to say that it was a false alarm; some Resistance soldiers had been mistaken for Communist troops.

We already knew that after his mother had been sent to China by the Communists the young king of Derge had organized a Resistance force in East Tibet which had been joined by other local leaders. We now heard that he had been forced to escape accompanied by a number of his ministers with hundreds of refugees following, and they were now close to Lhodzong. They had fought their way from Derge and had been fortunate in suffering few casualties and little loss of baggage. The party had gained such a reputation for bravery that the mere fact of their being in the same neighborhood gave other refugees renewed hope. However,



Kongbo peasants threshing barley.

Mount Namcha Barwa (the Blazing Mountain of Celestial Metal).





The main Brahmaputra Valley.

conditions in all the area around Lhodzong were daily becoming more and more trying; refugees were crowding into every valley and the shortage of food and grazing was acute.

Nyewo was also becoming disastrously congested; in its vicinity there were few places left where other refugees could shelter, and since all the rivers were in spate at this time of year it was almost impossible to get across them to look for empty camping sites.

Though the Chinese already had possession of most of the country, the Resistance forces still held the high pass at the end of the Nyewo Valley; in order to get supplies they continually raided the Communist troops on the other side, in which operation they had been very successful. I was extremely uneasy, however, for if the Communists managed to take the pass they would inevitably attack us. At one moment rumors came through that they were actually approaching but fortunately there was no foundation to these reports, for after some severe fighting they failed to get through. I knew, however, that sooner or later we would have to quit this valley, though no one could offer any suggestion where our party should make for; the final decision would have to come from me. I felt that as soon as I returned to the camp I would be caught up again in a ferment of agitation, and I still needed to be quiet in order to concentrate on the problem of how we could proceed. I therefore decided to stay in my retreat for a further two weeks, which I spent in intensive meditation. One night I had a vivid dream that I was leading a party of pilgrims to a holy place. Communist soldiers were on guard beside the road, but they appeared not to see us. We came to a river, the waters of which were tinged with blood. I had just crossed it by a bridge of logs when I heard a voice behind me saying, "Some of the pilgrims have fallen into the stream." I had not seen this myself, for I was resting on the farther bank. This dream made a great impression on me.

Bears had again attacked our animals; the messenger who came to tell me about this was followed by a second monk with the news that my bursar had arrived at the camp ahead of the baggage party in the hopes of discussing things with me. He was in a complaining mood, grumbling that nothing was being properly organized; it shocked him to think that we could ever have allowed bears to get at our animals. He considered the place we had chosen for our camp to be completely unsuitable and said that we must go back to the baggage camp which was on the farther side of the high pass; he felt quite sure that there was no immediate dan-

ger from the Communists. I asked about the conditions in his camp and soon discovered that they were just as bad as in ours; the place was very overcrowded and no one knew where to go next. They had lost many of their animals through lack of grazing, besides being short of food themselves. In spite of these difficulties, Tsethar was determined that we should retrace our steps and join them and he told Yak Tulku and Kino Tulku that this must be done. When they hesitated, he said that they could do as they liked, but that his own abbot must definitely go back. We argued about it for three days, till I finally decided to reject all his proposals and informed my party that I thought our best plan would be to go forward to Nyewo, as many of the refugees who had preceded us there had by now dispersed in various directions. Yönten was having difficulty in sending food supplies over to our valley and if we went to Nyewo food would be nearer at hand. I told Tsethar that it was out of the question for us to go back to his camp. I reminded him that I had traveled over a large part of the country and had a fairly accurate picture of what was happening; I considered that our only hope lay in getting to India. He must now take active steps to sell all useless baggage and only keep the most portable things. To this he would not agree; he said that everyone else had taken all their baggage and yaks with them. However, all my younger companions were so strongly of my opinion that he finally gave way, saying he would do his best, and went back to his own camp.

Akong Tulku's brother now returned, having met the baggage party on their way to join us. He was very critical about the way we were always changing our minds as to which direction to take, whereas Tsethar's party had come straight by the main road. He said that since I still appeared to have no real plan he must now take Akong Tulku and his young brother back to join Tsethar's party; if later on I made a definite decision about the route to be followed and Tsethar's group agreed, his own group could then rejoin us. The night that he was with us the bears came again and mauled his horse, which added to his opinion that our camping ground was not well chosen. I reminded him that when I planned my escape I had written to Akong Tulku stressing that he must decide for himself whether he wanted to come with me or not. When he replied that he wished to join me, I promised the people at his monastery that I would do my best to look after him. Now it must again be his own decision and if he wished to join Tsethar's group he could do so; but the responsibility of looking after him would no longer be mine.

Akong Tulku's brother was rather overwhelmed by this argument so, after the two of them had talked it over, he said he thought that perhaps he should go back to the other camp and try to persuade the people there to dispose of their extra baggage; but he also told me that in any case he would like to rejoin our party before long.

I now left my retreat and returned to the camp. We held a meeting and decided to go on to Nyewo. It was now the first week of July. Another very high mountain ridge lay before us; going up was not difficult, but the descent on the farther side involved us in a drop of some nine thousand feet. We were tormented by flies and it was very hot and exhausting, so we camped as soon as we reached the bridge below the pass. When the villagers learned that I was in the party they welcomed us warmly and various families invited me to stay with them and perform devotional ceremonies. Yönten had to buy supplies without it being known that they were for us, or the people would have undercharged. Again many refugees came to be blessed and to ask for advice.

News reached us here that Lama Ugyen was finding it difficult to get supplies in his little valley and might possibly come to the valley where we were staying, so it was evident that I could no longer think of going on a pilgrimage to the local holy places.

There was also some more serious news; the Communists were moving toward the borders of all the districts still held by Resistance troops. We heard airplanes at night and the local people were getting frightened. Since we were all facing the same possible danger, there was a great deal of sympathy shown and I was able to get much local information about possible escape routes. It appeared that if we were able to cross the junction of the Alado and Nyewo rivers, there was a rough track across the mountains leading to part of the lower Kongpo Valley. However the river had been in spate since early spring so no one had been able to cross, nor was it known what the conditions might be like on the farther side. People told me that it would be impossible to build any sort of a bridge with the river in its present state and no ferry boat could cross it. We thought, however, it might be possible for our horses to swim across, but were told that the track beside the river ran farther on through a steep gorge and that since a recent earthquake this path had been impossible for baggage animals because huge rocks had fallen across it. The local villagers could not really tell us much about this route, since none of them had actually followed it. I wondered if I could

possibly do it all on foot, always having been accustomed to riding, and Kino Tulku and Yak Tulku felt even more apprehensive. However they were determined to try.

News reached us that the Derge Resistance leader Khamdo Kartop was thinking of coming in our direction and that the queen of Nangchen might also wish to escape by this same route; both of them were still fighting their way through. It seemed possible that we might have to organize a large joint party, rather than make the attempt with only our own small group. At all events it was essential to keep our plans to ourselves, otherwise too many refugees might want to join us, thus making the party quite unmanageable. It was all very complicated.

Rumors had it that the Communists had by this time overrun the greater part of the country and were massing troops in the northeast, while more were coming in from the northwest; they were in full force in the Kongpo Valley and in the south.

Various families had left Jigme Rinpoche's and Tsethar's groups to come to Nyewo, and Repön's party also arrived after losing many of their yaks. They all wanted to join us. Besides these, a party of some eighty people from Dorje Tsering's area, led by one Lama Riwa arrived quite unexpectedly and attached themselves to us.

I went down to inspect the river with several men, including Ugyen Tendzin who had proved a most knowledgeable and competent person. There were no large waves, but the current was very strong. Ugyen Tendzin thought it was difficult to cross but that it might yet be managed, so we sent a letter to my bursar telling him that we intended to attempt the crossing.

A few days later I was asked to perform a funeral ceremony on the other side of the Nyewo River. We had almost finished it when news came that the Chinese were in the upper part of the Nyewo Valley where the Resistance troops were fighting them. As we returned to our camp across the river we found the bridge thronged with refugees pouring through it in the opposite direction. Friends whom I met on the bridge all told me that I should be going the other way, as the south side of the water would probably be dangerous. When I got back to our camp, I found all our party beside themselves with anxiety. Some of them wanted to follow the other refugees to the north side of the bridge, and all those who had lately joined our party had already gone. My people hardly dared to trust me in case I might have some different plan. Karma Tendzin's

second-in-command was already on our side of the river; all the local people were in a state of panic, with the males arming themselves with daggers, knives, or axes, in fact with any weapons they could lay hands on, for though they had no rifles, they intended to resist as best they could. Up till then we had not heard any sounds of guns or fighting. I sent a message to Karma Tendzin's lieutenant asking for the latest news of what had occurred in the Nyewo Valley. He had heard nothing definite; as far as he knew no eyewitness had seen any Chinese and he himself was waiting for a further message. After waiting for a couple of hours, I decided that we must move. I spoke again to the locals who were unable to tell me anything fresh.



The knot of eternity.

SIXTEEN

Traveling the Hard Way

WE WERE NOW LEFT with only our own party, and there were three alternative ways for us to follow. The first was for us to try to cross the turbulent Nyewo River in spite of the fact that we had very little information about the route and did not know whether any Chinese were in these parts. Moreover, should we attempt to go this way, we would have to leave our animals behind and go on foot. Another way would be to go on horseback through Kongpo keeping to our side of the Nyewo River; this might be very dangerous, for it was more than probable that Chinese troops would be in occupation of much of that area; besides, there would be an added difficulty in our having to cross the very high Lochen Pass. Thirdly we might join forces with Kartop and perhaps also with the queen of Nangchen in order to break through to the southwest by fighting our way. Since a move was necessary, I decided to go first to a small valley I knew of, near the point where we would attempt to cross the torrent if we decided to do so. It had a very narrow entrance which opened onto broader land suitable for camping; the grazing was good and there were no villages in the valley, nor had any other refugees discovered it. We traveled by night, keeping on the alert all the time in case we should hear the sound of guns. A man was left in the Nyewo Valley to report any further news of the Communists' approach. The following day he came to tell us that nothing had happened and that the valley was deserted. Headquarters sent me a message to say that the Chinese had come from Kongpo through Lochen Pass on their way to Nyewo, but the Resistance troops had at-

tacked them and captured one of the Chinese guns, also rifles and much ammunition. The local people who had rushed off with the refugees were now returning to their homes. They wanted our party to come back and begged that I should stay with them to perform various rites. However, I decided to leave the camp where it was and went backward and forward myself to perform whatever rites were needed.

The suddenness of the Communist scare seemed to me to have come as a warning that we might expect them in our area at any moment. They were definitely intent upon occupying this small pocket of country. We heard airplanes at night. I consulted all the senior members of our party and it was decided that we must move and that the only possible route was the one across the difficult river, which definitely meant traveling on foot down the gorge. Ugyen Tendzin said that, if I was determined to go that way, he would do his best to help in the crossing. He had previously suggested that we should procure some leather suitable for building coracles; now he immediately set to work on having one made. When it was ready we took it down to the river to make the experiment. He attached the coracle to the shore with a long rope; then got into it himself and paddled across; he found it quite easy to reach the farther bank. A second coracle was put in hand. I sent some of our horses and baggage mules back to Tsethar with a message to tell Akong Tulku about our plan, suggesting that his party should follow. The rest of the animals and baggage I sent to Lama Ugyen, with a letter saying, "The wind of karma is blowing in this direction; there is no indication that we should do otherwise than attempt this way of escape. Events are changing so suddenly, one cannot afford to ignore the dangers. I hope you will make up your mind to carry out your plans without delay and that they will work out well with the blessing of Buddha."

With all this public activity of building coracles and sending the animals away our plans leaked out. Rep̈on's group and the refugees under Lama Riwa together with various other small parties returned to join us; they camped all around our valley which was really too small for them to share. All of them were determined to come with us and they expected me to assume the leadership of the whole party which now amounted to 170 people. We still did not know whether the Communists were on the other side of the river or not. I resorted to takpa (divination); it indicated that no Chinese were there. We organized some porters among the local people, so were still able to take a part of our

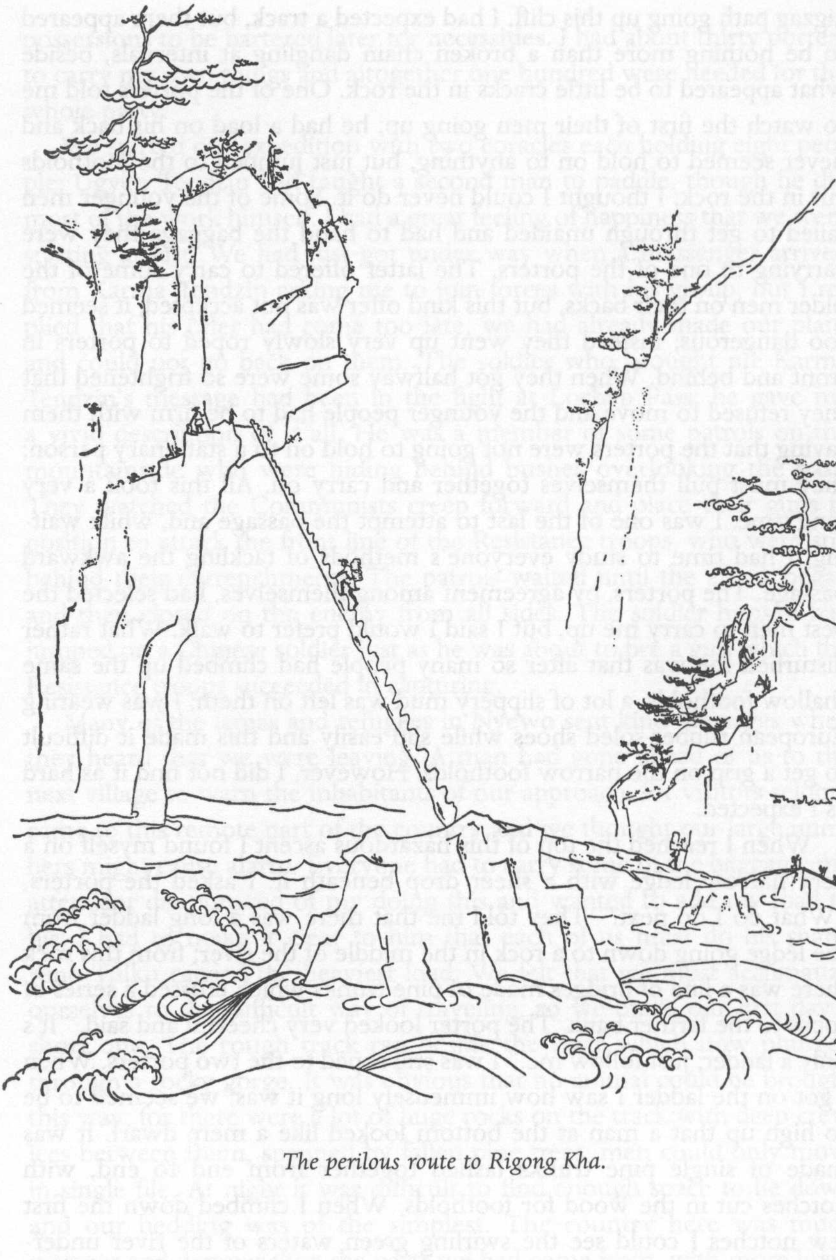
possessions to be bartered later for necessities. I had about thirty porters to carry my own things and altogether one hundred were needed for the whole party.

We started our expedition with two coracles each holding eight people; Ugyen Tendzin had taught a second man to paddle, though he did most of the work himself. I had a great feeling of happiness that we were starting at last. We had just got under way when a messenger arrived from Karma Tendzin asking me to join forces with his group, but I replied that his offer had come too late, we had already made our plans and could not go back on them. The soldier who brought me Karma Tendzin's message had been in the fight at Lochen Pass; he gave me a vivid description of it all. He was a member of some patrols on the mountainside who were hiding behind bushes overlooking the pass. They watched the Communists creep forward and place their guns in position to attack the front line of the Resistance troops, who were still behind their entrenchments. The patrols waited until the attack began and then closed on the enemy from all sides. The soldier himself had jumped on a Chinese soldier just as he was about to fire a gun which the Resistance troops succeeded in capturing.

Many of the lamas and refugees in Nyewo sent kind messages when they heard that we were leaving. A man had gone ahead of us to the next village to warn the inhabitants of our approach, for visitors seldom came to this remote part of the country and we thought our large numbers might cause alarm. Everyone had to carry some of the baggage; my attendant disapproved of my doing this and wanted to add my load to his; I had to make it clear to him that each of us must do his share; Kino Tulku carried the heaviest load. We felt that we must acclimatize ourselves to this difficult way of traveling, so we made our first day a short one. The rough track ran beside the river which now plunged through a rocky gorge. It was obvious that no animal could be brought this way, for there were a lot of huge rocks on the track with deep crevices between them, spanned by fallen pine trees; men could only move in single file. At night it was difficult to find enough space to lie down and our bedding was of the simplest. The country here was much warmer and damper than the parts we had come from, with more luxuriant vegetation. The nearer we got to the village of Rigong Kha the worse the track became, till we were faced with a very high cliff coming right down to the river. I was horrified when I looked at a very sketchy

zigzag path going up this cliff. I had expected a track, but there appeared to be nothing more than a broken chain dangling at intervals, beside what appeared to be little cracks in the rock. One of the porters told me to watch the first of their men going up; he had a load on his back and never seemed to hold on to anything, but just jumped to the footholds cut in the rock; I thought I could never do it. Some of the younger men failed to get through unaided and had to hand the baggage they were carrying to one of the porters. The latter offered to carry some of the older men on their backs, but this kind offer was not accepted, it seemed too dangerous; instead they went up very slowly roped to porters in front and behind. When they got halfway some were so frightened that they refused to move and the younger people had to be firm with them saying that the porters were not going to hold on to a stationary person; they must pull themselves together and carry on. All this took a very long time. I was one of the last to attempt the passage and, while waiting, I had time to study everyone's methods of tackling the awkward passage. The porters, by agreement among themselves, had selected the best men to carry me up, but I said I would prefer to walk. What rather disturbed me was that after so many people had climbed up the same shallow footholds, a lot of slippery mud was left on them; I was wearing European rubber-soled shoes while slip easily and this made it difficult to get a grip on the narrow footholds. However, I did not find it as hard as I expected.

When I reached the top of this hazardous ascent I found myself on a very narrow ledge with a sheer drop beneath it. I asked the porters, "What do I do next?" They told me that there was a long ladder from the ledge going down to a rock in the middle of the river; from this rock there was a line of bridges made of pine trunks which crossed a series of rocks to the farther bank. The porter looked very cheerful and said, "It's only a ladder; just follow me." I was still roped to the two porters. When I got on the ladder I saw how immensely long it was; we seemed to be so high up that a man at the bottom looked like a mere dwarf. It was made of single pine trunks lashed together from end to end, with notches cut in the wood for footholds. When I climbed down the first few notches I could see the swirling green waters of the river underneath; a few more steps, and I felt I was poised in space over an expanse of water. There was a cold wind coming up from a large cave under the rock into which the river was pouring; worst of all, the ladder shook in



The perilous route to Rigong Kha.

a terrifying way with the weight of the many porters who were there trying to help me. All our party who had reached the bottom of the ladder stopped to watch me. I was told that the porters had had great difficulties with some of the older men, who had been so frightened that they had nearly fainted. There was great rejoicing when I rejoined them at the bottom. When we reached the dry land we pitched camp and from here we could see the ladder and the ledge some hundred feet higher up. Next day's track proved to be no better than the last; no part of it was on the level and we had continually to climb up cliff faces more than a thousand feet high, sometimes only by footholds cut in the rock. However, after our first experience these held no terrors for us. In places we had to make up the roadway itself because, since the Chinese had come into Tibet, this route had been little used and much of it had been disturbed by the earthquake of 1950 which had been especially severe in this region. I was getting more acclimatized to walking and sleeping under these rough conditions.

The porter whom we had sent ahead to Rigong Kha returned with a local man to welcome us to his village. He told us that there were no Chinese in Rigong Kha, though they were farther eastward in the valley; however, there were strong Resistance forces in Upper Powo who believed that they could push the Communists back.

Kino Tulku had been too energetic, the very heavy loads which he had chosen to carry were beyond his strength and his eyesight became affected. We feared it was a blood clot; however, there was nowhere on the track where we could stop, so the most important thing was to get him to the village as soon as possible. From where we were we could see small farms in the distance, but there was still a long way to walk and it was all uphill. There were very few streams and we found the going very exhausting without any water to drink. When we came to a field about half a mile from Rigong Kha we stopped for the night and some of our party went up to the village to buy food. They found most of the villagers very friendly. Kino Tulku's eyes had been growing steadily worse and the whole camp was very worried as we thought this might affect our plans. The following day a number of the villagers came to visit us. They were very surprised at finding so large a party and could not conceal their curiosity, for they had never met people from East Tibet other than a few pilgrims; no other refugees had come this way. In this isolated village the inhabitants had never seen horses, mules, or

yaks, their only domestic animals being small buffaloes and pigs. Their dialect was a mixture of Kongpo and Powo and they wore the Kongpo dress, which for the men was the ordinary *chuba* (gown) made of woolen cloth worn under a long straight garment made of goatskin with the hair on the outside. These were belted at the waist and cut open in the middle to slip over the head. The women's chubas were also of wool; they wore caps edged with gold brocade and they all carried a good deal of jewelry, chiefly in the form of earrings or necklaces; their boots were embroidered in bright colors.

The climb up to the village was easy and the people there gave us a warm welcome. We were a little afraid lest some traveler coming from the eastern side might turn out to be a spy, but actually there was no need for anxiety on this score. The villagers had had no authentic news of happenings at Lhasa; some vague rumors had reached them through the Communists in the lower part of the valley: When we assured them that the Communists had taken control in Lhasa and that the Dalai Lama had escaped to India, they still would not believe it. Traders coming to Rigong Kha brought the news that though the Resistance forces had fought very bravely in the Tong Gyuk Valley and had at first held the bridge, the Communists had finally gained possession of it. Now, all the area as far as Chamdo was in Communist hands; they had rebuilt the road from Chengtu in Szechuan to Chamdo and their troops were everywhere. In all the districts they had started to form rigorous indoctrination groups. It was now certain that they would penetrate before long into the Tong Gyuk Valley, barring our further route along it, so we were obliged to revise all our ideas on the subject of the best route to follow. Up till then we had been hoping to follow the Yigong River to where it joins the Brahmaputra, almost at the point where that great river turns down toward India. There was nothing to be done but to find another way. We asked the villagers if they knew of any other route by which we could cross the military highway the Chinese had constructed, but though they supposed that there might be some tracks across the mountain ranges, they really had no idea how we could get through to Lower Kongpo. Some people suggested that we might join forces with the Potö Resistance group, but they were some distance away and in any case we were not bent on fighting.

There was a small temple in Rigong Kha and the villagers asked the lama in charge of it to invite me to stay with him so that I could perform

certain rites on their behalf; they also wanted me to preach there. People from several small villages in surrounding valleys came in order to ask for a blessing and some of them suggested that we could still hide in various remote places in the vicinity where there would be little chance of the Chinese finding us. Since no other refugees had come to Rigong Kha, there had been no inroads on their food supplies and all the villagers were very generous in giving us hospitality after our arduous journey.

Meanwhile, we were preparing for further travels, giving our heavy goods such as rugs in exchange for food, particularly such items as tsampa, dried meat, butter, cheeses, and pork fat. Our porters had been sent back to Nyewo as soon as we reached Rigong Kha; they had been ever so helpful and, though not long with us, we had got to know them very well. We gave them a number of presents such as jewelry, cloth, etc., as we had little money; but they were so modest that we had difficulty in persuading them to accept even that much. As we parted they wished us a good journey and expressed the hope that we might escape the Communists.

We stayed at Rigong Kha for about a fortnight; it was now the end of August and we decided to move to the small valley of Tso-phu, lying due south. There are two high passes at the upper part of this valley, one leading southeast and the other southwest. We had not decided which to take; however, we thought this valley would be on our way and it was not very safe to remain at Rigong Kha for much longer. First we had to recross the river. The group of refugees under Lama Riwa decided to stay on at Rigong Kha saying they would join us later. The rest of us, who included Repön's group and some other refugees, went down to the river, taking some men from the village to act as porters. The torrent was so turbulent that it had been impossible to build a bridge across it. Instead, a thick hemp rope had been fixed to the rocks on either bank. A pulley on it was attached to a belt to hold the passenger; a long rope affixed to this was held between the men on the opposite banks. The weight of the passenger carried him into the middle of the river, and the men on the farther side hauled him up the rest of the way.

Even while we were crossing the river we were told that some Communists were coming this way. In case they appeared suddenly we were resolved to cut the rope.

Kino Tulku's eyes had improved under treatment, but now his legs

began to trouble him so that he was only able to walk very slowly. He believed his illness to be incurable. His wife, however, was determined that we should all keep together; she was beside herself with anxiety; it was difficult for me to know what to do. However, after the scare that the Chinese were behind us, Kino Tulku himself decided that we were not to stay behind on his account, saying that he would go to a small village in a nearby valley where he could rest—a sorrowful parting for us all. We were still keeping in touch with our friends in Rigong Kha who sent us supplies and gave us the latest news. I sent a messenger to the village to ask them if they knew of anyone with a knowledge of Lower Kongpo who would be prepared to come to India with us and act as guide. They promised to find someone; they had several people in mind and thought it would not take more than a week to send a man. I sent a similar message to Kino Tulku in case there was anyone in his village, but no one appeared, so we started to go farther down the valley. We had yet to decide which of the two passes we should take. A lama came to us from Rigong Kha; he told us that he had brought his party from Nyewo following our lead. The conditions there had grown worse, more and more refugees were crowding into the area and there was a very serious food shortage, also a good deal of illness. Everyone was saying that Trungpa Tulku's party had shown the way of escape and many people were starting to follow, though others had decided against this course, on hearing what a difficult track we had had to traverse on foot. The people at Nyewo had not understood what direction I would take after Rigong Kha; they thought we would be going further along the Yigong Valley. The lama told me that he had met some groups already going that way. I said, "They must be mad since it is known that the Communists are now in that area." He replied that it was all right, for the Communists had now withdrawn, so he had heard; he added that the eighty refugees under Lama Riwa, who had intended coming with us, had changed their minds and were going with other refugees by the Yigong Valley.

It was now early September, and the weather was breaking up with frequent storms. It was likely that there would be a lot of snow on the passes and the road might be blocked. It took us some four or five days to reach the far end of the valley, from where we could really study the terrain, and we now concluded that the Tso-phu Pass which went in a southeasterly direction was the one which we should take. It appeared

fairly easy, though rain was falling continuously which would mean a lot of soft snow higher up. I sent an advance party to investigate; they were only able to get about a quarter of the way and were then driven back by severe storms. They had found that the fresh snow on the pass was very deep, but thought that if the weather improved, even for three or four days, a crossing would be practicable. No news had come through concerning a possible guide for us. A local man offered to find one within a week saying that, should he fail, he would come back to discuss the situation with us; he added, "If I don't come, you may take it that I am dead." The weather now cleared suddenly, but still no sign of a guide or of the local man; we concluded that he must really have died.

There was nothing we could do except wait as patiently as possible. Yak Tulku and I with a few monks decided to go into retreat. I told Ugyen Tendzin to make several coracles while we were away and to train some of the men to paddle them, for we would need them later on when we had to cross the Tsangpo, which is the name given to the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra in Tibet.

The spot chosen for our retreat was inspiringly beautiful, it lay beside a blue lake surrounded by high snow-covered mountains; their peaks were glistening above the clouds and pine trees grew all around. The whole place was utterly different to the country about Surmang; it was more like Himalayan scenery.* Every evening we sat round the campfire for our meal. Once we heard an airplane overhead and consulted whether we should cover the fire, though some said that the airplane was too far off to notice so small a thing. I took this opportunity to tell them how important it was in times of war never to show any sort of light. For a week all fires were carefully concealed, but when no further airplanes were heard we ceased to keep up this discipline. While waiting for a guide to materialize, all the camp busied themselves in repairing boots and making other preparations for the journey. We had expected that Akong Tulku would be joining us with Tsethar's group, however nothing had been heard of them. Our party was so large that Dorje Tsering undertook to organize the people into groups under separate leaders; he brought me a list with the names and ages of all the party. I was shocked at the numbers: about 170 and among them men and women

*While in this place I wrote a poem an English translation of which, by my friend John Blackwood, appears on pages 259–60.

seventy and eighty years old as well as babies in arms, but very few able-bodied men. I decided to explain to all of them the sort of journey we were facing and how very hard it was likely to be. I told them that we would not be able to visit any villages, so there would be no further opportunity to get fresh supplies of food; we must take all essential provisions, as from now. There would be many high passes and difficult streams on our route. It must be understood that we would be without tents and might have to sleep in the snow. We might well be captured before reaching the Indian frontier, for there were a great many Chinese in all this region. Finally I said to them, "If any of you should be overcome by exhaustion, by long climbs and by trekking through rough country, it will be impossible for the others to stop and look after him. I want you all to realize what you are undertaking and if you think the hardships will be too great for you, now is the time to decide if you still wish to come with us." I added, "I do not want any definite answers for a day or two," for I knew that if anyone shouted that he wanted to come, all the rest would follow like sheep. After three days, they all said they wanted to come with me and that they would rather fall by the wayside than fall into Communist hands, for then at least they would feel that they had made all possible effort. I arranged meetings to explain to everyone what rules they must promise to follow, and concluded with these words: "If we are attacked we must not kill any of the Chinese. We must not steal people's property on the way. There must be no disunity among ourselves; and if anything goes wrong I must immediately be told about it." Everyone agreed to keep these rules, though Repön's party and those refugees who had their arms with them were not happy about the nonfighting clause. I told them that they must now provide themselves with the necessary food and train themselves to eat sparingly from the start. Everyone now sent their representatives to make these final purchases, bartering their tents and all superfluous possessions; the porters were sent back to Rigong Kha. I was very distressed at having to leave my books behind. Though the party disposed of their heavier goods, they still clung to their cooking pots and much spare clothing, these things in addition to their supplies of food made the loads very heavy; they amounted to almost twice as much as an average person would normally carry, the weight being chiefly due to the large amounts of food that had to be taken. Those of the party who were unable to carry all their own stuff arranged among themselves that if some of their

stronger companions were willing to take a part of it, particularly gold and silver coins and jewelry, they would be given half of these things if they reached India. Since a supply of tsampa was vital, extra bags of it were entrusted to the strongest members of the party. Some people had bartered their possessions for musk which was light to carry and very valuable.

A message came from Kino Tulku that he had found a man who knew all about Lower Kongpo; he was prepared to act as our guide if I did not object to his bringing his wife with him. I gladly accepted their services provided that he was really aquainted with the terrain. He was due to arrive on September 13 but did not turn up on that or the following day. Meanwhile we had completed our preparations and I sent some men up the pass to clear the snow. They found that much of it had already melted and told me that everything was in good condition for the crossing.

SEVENTEEN

Days of Crisis

I DECIDED THAT if the guide and his wife did not arrive before two o'clock we should start by ourselves. This we did and reached the snow line without them. The weather was very clear; high up as we were, we could even see the mountains near Nyewo. For the first time I felt a conviction that we were going the right way and would reach India; I was aware of an inner strength guiding me and felt that I was not alone.

We waited in the cold till the next day and when I went around the various groups, I found that they were eating too much of their precious food; so I had to speak to them all very seriously, explaining that the food we were carrying would have to last a long time if we were to survive; also that they must be much more careful when camping to conceal themselves as much as possible and in no case to light any fires unless they could be screened from view. In future I myself would tell them if fires could be lighted at all. Furthermore I said, "Our journey to India must be thought of as a pilgrimage; something that in the past few Tibetans have been able to make. Whether or not India has changed, the spiritual blessings imparted to that country by the presence of the Buddha remain: The places where he lived, freed himself from the bondage of samsara, taught, and died have an eternal value. It is fortunate for us that our way is hard and that we are struggling against greater difficulties than the pilgrims of the past, for by this means we shall learn and profit the more from our journey. We should not be thinking only about the enemies threatening us from without. Each moment we should be

aware of ourselves and of the forces of destruction that threaten each man from within. If we fail in this, we are indeed putting the spiritual object of our journey in jeopardy; each step along the way should be holy and precious to us."

After this talk we all watched for the guide, but there was no sign of him, so I decided to go on without him the following day as the weather was not very good. At nightfall, however, he and his wife suddenly appeared wearing their Kongpo costumes. I had asked for him to bring some more of these garments, but he had not been able to obtain any. The guide's name was Tsepa, he was a nice fellow and appeared to be intelligent; above all, he had traveled all over the area and knew it from end to end. He said how sorry he was that he had not been able to reach us on the appointed day, but he had had to sell all his possessions; he brought a gun and ammunition with him. I explained to him the route we proposed to take following the suggestions of various local people and he agreed that it was feasible; indeed he considered our prospects hopeful. Early the next morning we set out in a scatter of snow. We found that the pass was not so steep as had been expected and the new snow had turned into ice, which made it easier to walk on. When we reached the top everyone shouted the customary Tibetan formula "*Lha gyal lo!*" ("The gods are victorious!").

We were now facing toward India and beyond us lay the valley of Tong Gyuk, which appeared to be empty, though we were still apprehensive lest some Communists might be lurking there. Our party was so conspicuous in their dark clothes against the white snowy background, I could only hope that they would not be spotted as they moved down. I told them that at least they must make as little noise as possible. The wind was against us and it was very cold; the sun seemed to give out no heat. If we could go farther down the valley and cross over the mountain range toward Lower Kongpo it would be the easiest way, so I sent some of our people ahead to find out if this was possible. While they were away, we camped at the foot of the pass. On their return they told me that they had not seen any Chinese, nor anyone else, but there were a few footprints of Tibetans, obviously old ones. We had several days of pleasant walking through the valley, though always feeling a little uneasy lest our large party might somehow have been spotted by the Communists. When we camped at night we always chose a small secluded branch valley where there were herdsmen's huts, for this part was at a

high altitude with very few trees and was used in the early summer as a grazing ground. Now, in late September, there were a lot of small yellow berries on the trees near the river which though acid could be eaten. As we went down the slope of the valley we came into a region of fir trees; seeing fresh footprints we decided to halt in the scrub under the trees. I sent Tsepa to investigate and told him to go into the villages pretending to be a messenger from relatives of some of the people there. The villagers gave him a lot of information about the number of Chinese in the vicinity of Lower Kongpo, and told him how strictly they were guarding the place; though people were still able to barter their barley in the surrounding districts the whole district was in a state of persecution, so they said. Anyone who had been sufficiently wealthy to have a servant was ill-treated; servants were encouraged to wear their master's clothes and the masters made to wear those of their servants. The Communists had established working camps for their prisoners and forced them to labor on road making. A great number of Tibetans had died of starvation and other hardships, so the villagers lived in the utmost terror all the time. Tsepa managed to learn more about the layout of the land and what route we could follow; he also procured a small extra quantity of food.

From here I sent a second messenger to Tsethar's group to tell Akong Tulku where we were and the probable route that we intended to take. We went on down the valley and camped by a lake. It was so beautiful here that in spite of possible danger we could not resist choosing this site; the weather was however becoming colder. Our journey the next day was uphill; we gradually reached barer ground with more rocks and fewer trees, and the valley was becoming narrower; for several days the same sort of country lay before us. One morning we heard a man's voice; some of our party rushed off rifle in hand as far as a small bridge we had just crossed. It turned out to be Bursar Tsethar with another monk. They told us that Akong Tulku was following close behind. Their party had sold most of their possessions and had been joined by about 120 more refugees who had insisted on coming with Akong Tulku. Tsethar said that they all wished to join our party. He approved of our plans and agreed that we had chosen the right route; on the other hand, he thought that a rescue operation might be organized from the Indian side to include all the refugees, so perhaps it would have been better if we had waited for this to happen. Since the weather was still good, however, we decided to go on. The valley proved to be longer than we had

expected and we camped again in the shelter of herdsmen's huts where we could have really good fires. We made the attempt to cross the pass over the high mountains very early the next morning, but were only able to get about a quarter of the way when it started to snow; the storm was so severe that we were brought to a standstill. However, we found some more huts where we could stop for a day and a night. In the afternoon some of our men struggled on to see how far up the pass they could go. They reported that the snow was terribly deep, much worse than the Tso-phu Pass. I arranged that eight of our strongest men should hand over their baggage and try to make a track through the snow which we could follow. They found that they could make no headway when walking and the only way was for a man to lie prone so as to push the snow down with his weight. This was extremely exhausting and each man could only do this particular job five consecutive times, then it was taken over by the next man, and so on as each man's turn came round again; the others followed to tread down the track. The actual incline of the mountain was so steep that we almost had to turn back, for it did not allow of our making a zigzag track. As it was, the rest of our party managed to struggle after the leaders. When we had nearly reached the top, we saw a large group coming behind us in the valley; we took it for granted that this must be Akong Tulku's party. By the time we reached a plateau, it was midday. We found ourselves surrounded by further rocks and making our way between them came suddenly upon a yet steeper gradient. However, at this great height the snow had hardened and this made the going slightly easier. It was difficult for the leaders to keep to the right track; several times they strayed off the path followed by the rest of the party, which meant that we all had to retrace our steps. However, at last we saw the prayer flag showing that we had reached the summit. The sun had already set and only a red glow remained; the wind was piercingly cold. The valley below seemed uninhabited, though we could not see very clearly as there were so many rocks in the way. Some of our party had fallen a long way behind; I felt anxious for the older people in case they had to spend the night in the snow. I knew that they could not have climbed any quicker, they had done magnificently by keeping up such a regular pace. We checked the list of families and felt sure that the younger members would look after their parents. All those who had reached the summit now started to walk down in the twilight. We saw a path of even ground below us, but had some

difficulty in finding a way to reach it, being continually confronted with sudden rocky outcrops. A lot of loose stones got dislodged and the people in the rear had to shout a warning to those who were pressing ahead, for we had scattered in all directions, with each man trying to find his own way down. It was all but dark when the leaders reached a level piece of ground where we could stop for the night. There was an overhanging rock which offered shelter for some of us and my people insisted on giving me the best place; many others were forced to lie down in the snow. At sunrise we watched for the rest of the party. I feared that there might have been some casualties among the older members and was very happy to learn that everyone had survived. Once we were all together again we started down the valley, though everyone was pretty well exhausted after the hardships of the night before, but we felt we must struggle on since time and food were running very short. I sent a man ahead to see if the way was clear; he reported that he had not seen anyone and that the valley was a good one with no wild animals about. The wind had fallen and the sun was shining.

Now that we had crossed over the pass we were no longer in the Tong Gyuk Valley; we found ourselves on a plateau across which a river ran fed by streams from small surrounding valleys. Tsepa directed us to go by one of these valleys running southeast. There were ranges of mountains on either side of it so we could only keep to the valley bottom until we found a turning point. One day, as we were traveling particularly slowly, Akong Tulku suddenly came striding along ahead of his party to overtake us. It was a most joyful meeting for us both: He said that the pass had not been so difficult for his people, as we had already trodden down the snow. The rest of his party soon followed and we all went on together and camped in herdsmen's huts. Akong had a great deal to report about happenings from the time when he received my letter telling of our intended departure from Nyewo with its details about getting rid of our animals and going on foot to Rigong Kha. Both his brother and Bursar Tsethar had thought that there must be some way to Rigong Kha which could be taken on horseback with the baggage on mules and yaks, and they had managed to cross the Alado River at a point near their camp, after which they went southeast by a temporary bridge built by some of the Resistance. From there they changed direction and went across several very high passes toward Rigong Kha. The track was so broken up that in many cases they had had to put three

trunks over chasms between the rocks, and once they had to build a whole bridge themselves. Hard work like this could only be done by the able-bodied men while the rest of the party waited with the animals: It caused a lot of delay. In spite of all their care three of their horses were lost on these fragile bridges, also owing to lack of good feeding some of the horses were on the point of breaking down, so those which seemed too weak to continue the journey were sent back to Jigme Rinpoche's group to recuperate. The party finally reached Rigong Kha with some three hundred yaks and twenty horses, to the great astonishment of the inhabitants, for they had never seen such animals before; and as there was little available grazing the beasts had often to be fed on grain.

When Tsethar and his companions heard that we had left about a fortnight previously for the Tso-phu Valley, they arranged to leave their horses and mules in the care of some of the villagers near Rigong Kha. Some of the refugees, however, could not bring themselves to part with their animals, so when they started on the further journey they took them with them, hoping they would be able to swim over the river at the cable bridge; but the current was so strong that many of the beasts were swept away by the flood.

By the time our friends reached the Tso-phu Valley our own tracks had become obliterated and some of the refugees, fearing that they would never find us, decided to stay in the valley with what animals they had left. Akong Tulku and Tsethar, however, were determined to carry on; incidentally they were also able to visit Kino Tulku whom they found to be very ill. He told them that he was very lonely without us, but was glad that we had gone on, for he thought our decision to try to get to India was a wise one, though it might bring us into danger.

The following morning as I looked down on the camp I was amazed to see so many people, for Tsethar's group had added some 120 to our numbers, thus bringing the total up to nearly three hundred. We all went on together and as I looked back, it seemed more like an army on the march than a party of refugees.

The ground was still rocky with sudden steep slopes. At last we reached the junction of two valleys where the local trading road from the Powo Valley to Kongpo runs beside the river. Our scouts told me that they had seen a man with four loaded yaks going along it, so we waited for two hours, hiding among the rocks, while two of our men crossed the road and climbed the rocks above it, whence they could see

about three miles of the road in either direction. Once they had given us the all clear the whole party crossed the road and forded the river beside it. Here we entered a small valley where we found several herdsmen's huts, though no one was about. We spent a very disturbed night; several people thought that they heard men approaching and with so many women and children in the newly arrived party there was a great deal of noise in the camp with the babies crying a lot. At daybreak Tsepa and I held a consultation. He now recognized where we were and thought that we should leave the valley where we had spent the night in order to cross a high pass to the south; though he did not know what we would find on the farther side of it, he felt sure it would be in the right direction and we would be getting nearer to Lower Kongpo. No one else in the camp had the least notion of our position; they simply put their trust in the leaders and said they would follow them wherever they went. I felt that we could no longer take any risks and should avoid the more open valleys with so large a party, not to mention the many noisy children. Few of these people had any idea of how to hide themselves in an emergency and they were mostly wearing light-colored clothes, conspicuous against a dark background. They had so little imagination that it never entered their heads that the Communists might capture us. However difficult it might be for the older and the very young members of the party to go over this rough ground, Tsepa and I agreed that it was the only safe thing to do.

Before we set off again, I called everyone together. I explained that we were now likely to enter more dangerous country, for the land here was more thickly populated. It was important for everyone to realize that the Communists had control of this area, so no one could be trusted. If any of us should meet villagers it would be impossible to disguise the fact that we were a party of refugees. We must give them no clues about the direction that we were intending to take. Anything we bought must be paid for and everyone we happened to meet must be treated with the utmost courtesy. It was most important that we should make as little noise as possible, and if anyone felt ill, he must inform me at once.

We were still able to travel by day and crossed a low pass. Our guide was sure that from this point we should see some part of lower Kongpo. We all felt excited about it. However, when we reached the top, all we saw was another range of rocky mountains, with no sign of life. Tsepa was puzzled, he did not know where to go next, but decided that we

should proceed down to a little valley that could be seen below. When we reached it we found that there was no outlet, so that it was necessary to traverse another mountain. Beyond this we found that we had three more ranges to cross at the last one of which we were faced with a near precipice. It was covered with flat slippery grass; the descent was dangerous and some of the older people fell. Yet another chain of mountains lay ahead of us. We followed tracks made by wild animals and when we reached the summit of the next col we found a deep round hollow with trees growing in the grass, large enough for us all to camp there for the night.

Our guide realized that he had lost his way and was much distressed; Tsethar also was much disturbed and began complaining that none of us had any definite idea about the way we ought to take; he added that he was sure that by now the rest of the refugees would have been rescued by the Resistance soldiers. I told him that we had no evidence of this and that I had been trusted to lead our party and we were all doing our best.

Next morning we followed a small track running across the shoulder of the mountain in front of us, which pointed in the direction of India. It sloped gently upward and was an easy walk. Unfortunately the land was very bare without trees or rocks, so I was afraid that our large party would be seen. Toward evening we noticed some small rocky mountains with a high range of snow-covered peaks behind them. People did not know what to think, some suggested that they were the mountains of Upper, others of Lower, Kongpo. As we mounted higher and higher the snow on the mountains reflected the dying sun and looked as if made of gold. We were afraid that if we went farther we would be on yet higher ground, so we camped for the night. The frost was severe; there were no streams and our only water came from melted snow. Added to this we were limited in our use of fires, partly for the fear that they would be seen and also because of the difficulty of finding anything to burn. The next day we discovered that the track we had been following only led to the snow mountains which were not in the right direction, so we changed course and descended by a steep slope. Ahead of us we saw a pleasant-looking valley with a river winding through it. There was some consternation in the camp when a black object was seen near the river which people thought was a man. Their uneasiness went so far that they imagined they heard voices. However, looking through my field glasses I could see that it was only a young yak, though there might well be a

herdsman with it; even so, there was nothing to be done except to continue our downward course, for if we had stayed on the mountain we would have been still more conspicuous. We made our way through squat willows and found an empty hut. All who could went inside, while the rest of the party lay down in the open. Some of the younger members organized a scouting expedition in the evening; there appeared to be no one about.

Some of the refugees were getting very short of food and came to ask me how long I thought it was likely to be before they would be able to renew their stocks. I had to explain that it was unlikely to be soon and they must ration themselves very strictly. They carried on for about a week and then came again to ask me if my party could spare some of their rations; unfortunately we had not much left, for the going had been so difficult that we had only been able to cover short distances each day. By now our guide had completely lost his bearings; he had no idea where we were, but we continued more or less blindly and after crossing several more ranges found ourselves in a large valley on quite low ground which we thought would probably be inhabited. It was decided that I should go on ahead with Akong Tulku, Yak Tulku, Yönten, and our guide and if we found a possible way, we would signal to those behind. It was a great relief when we found that the valley was apparently empty. However, we did come across traces of dung and men's footprints; Yönten and the guide thought they might be about twenty-four hours old. We consulted among ourselves about the next step to be taken, but no one had any positive suggestion. The party behind waited and watched us as we came back toward them. A lot of people wanted us to halt and make tea, but I thought this too dangerous, so we went on down the valley. After going about halfway down it we saw a mountain, its slopes thickly covered with pines; I suddenly felt sure that this was the way we should go, though Tsethar was not of my opinion; he thought that to go ahead on the chance would be most impractical. However, we all started to climb the slope, but when we had gone a mile or so Tsethar and several others suggested that it would have been much better to have continued along the valley. They grumbled that they had had no tea and were feeling tired, and now they were having to struggle up yet another mountain. I tried to explain that the valley they wished to follow led away from the direction of India, and it was also obvious that there were people living in these parts. Tsethar and the others were so annoyed that

they began to argue with me. I told them, "If you want to go along the valley, you had better do so; in which case I can take no further responsibility for you. I myself am going up this mountain and when we reach a more remote spot we can stop and make tea." Some of the refugees shouted, "Yes! That is the right thing to do" and finally they all decided to follow me. I understood how desperately tired everyone was feeling, yet I was confident that we must go this way. Personally, I felt a strange exhilaration traveling through such wild and unknown country; an inner strength seemed to sustain me. We walked on until we got above the pine level; here there was dense scrub, so that we lost our track again and again. It was a matter of battling through the undergrowth; those who had swords slashed their way through. Finally all of us reached the bare rocky mountainside beyond the scrub. In the distance, we heard sounds which seemed either to come from explosions and the rumbling of lorries, or, as some of the party thought, they might be sounds of actual fighting. On the farther side of the mountain we came to a dry valley. Since the decision to come this way had been entirely mine, our guide turned to me and asked where we should make for next. There were three gaps in the valley and he wanted to know which one we should choose. I said, "the middle one," and when asked for my reasons I replied, "One had to be chosen"—I added the two Tibetan sayings, "A doubting mind will not fulfill one's wish," and "Two needles cannot sew at the same time." As we went through the gap I saw a cairn by the side of it; this cheered me, for it showed that others had gone this way before. Farther on we suddenly felt a cold wind and found ourselves on the top of a cliff overlooking a lake which had black and red rocks reflected in it. My determination to take this way had not lessened and actually we found that the going was not too difficult, for we were able to move from rock to rock till we reached the farther side where we found tracks of wild animals. We now stopped for the night trying to screen our fires; however, it was impossible to disguise them from the sky and an airplane actually flew over. To add to my troubles I was told that one of the older men was very feeble; his relations were supporting him and other refugees carried his baggage. Beyond the lake the ground was flat and open, but ahead there lay a range of mountains, so that we were again faced with an arduous climb to a col, following tracks of hooves. Here the snow was deeper; we had to revert to the method we used over the previous high pass, with eight men again crushing down the snow under

the weight of their prostrate bodies, though this time the gradient was not so steep as before. From the summit Tsepa thought that things looked more hopeful, we could again see far-distant ranges in a southerly direction which we thought must be on the farther side of the Brahmaputra. Our present position, however, was anything but an easy one. The ground sloped downward to a small depression and then rose again to an even higher range. Again we were faced with having to force our way through with the help of the eight men. This second climb proved to be very steep and I was exceedingly worried about the weak old man. We decided that he must be given more food, though our own resources were already so slender; it helped him to carry on. I looked forward to reaching the top of the col, since our guide had been so sure that we were traveling in the right direction; but when we arrived there, it was only to see that we were surrounded by ranges, all under snow. Sounds of distant lorries or explosions were no longer to be heard. We appeared to be at the end of a range; the ground in front of us led steadily downhill to a series of lakes almost below snow level, though there were scattered patches of snow all around. We stopped to rest by one of the lakes and I looked through my field glasses at the valley beyond. It was very broad with a river winding through it between meadows and patches of pines, but I did not see any people there. Our guide thought that we must be somewhere near Tsela Dzong, the junction of the Upper Kongpo River and the Brahmaputra. I knew that the district would be likely to be dangerous, especially if we took the wrong pass, for this part of the country was certainly both more thickly populated and under fairly complete Chinese occupation; we had heard that the Communists were trying to indoctrinate the inhabitants which meant that some could not be entirely trusted. I asked the others for their opinion and they all agreed that if we were really near Tsela Dzong the wide valley would be very unsafe, so it would be better to turn eastward toward Lower Kongpo. We therefore decided to go a little farther down the mountain and then veer round to a southeasterly course; this meant a longer route and led through a good deal of scrub. It brought us eventually to a series of valleys which we had to cross, a matter of continually scrambling up- and downhill for about a week.

EIGHTEEN

Touch and Go!

THOUGH I HAD frequently impressed upon all members of our party that they must inform me about any particular difficulties, I had been given no warning of an emergency, until some of them came to tell me that several of them had run out of food. They were actually beginning to boil the leather of their yak-skin bags; usually this leather is roughly cured with much of the fat left in it so it has some food value. I made enquiries among other groups and found they were having to do the same thing. The people had not wanted to worry me, since they knew that I had so many other grave anxieties.

At the same time we again lost our bearings and went too far in a northeasterly direction, which compelled us to retrace our steps for three days. Tsepa's belief that we were near Tsela Dzong had evidently been wrong. We now followed a small valley running east until it also turned in a northerly direction and we had to leave it for another leading toward the south. Again there were more mountain ranges in front of us; the nearest ones were not very high and we were able to cross two each day for three days, but after this we were faced with much higher ridges each of which took more than a day's traveling to cross.

By this time many more of the refugees had consumed their last provisions, except for their leather bags and my own group had decided that they too must fall back on this fare, though some leather would have to be kept to build the coracles needed to cross the Brahmaputra, which meant we would have to go on very short commons meanwhile; it was now early November and there were no wild vegetables which could be

used as a supplement. In spite of all their troubles the party was still cheerful and as soon as they found themselves in sufficiently remote places everyone would laugh and sing and individual groups would join with the monks in devotional chanting. They all seemed to have become acclimatized to the routine of traveling and the daily hardships.

Previously the weather had been good and usually sunny, but now winter was beginning with storms of rain turning into snow. It was taking longer to cover any distance over these high mountains and looking back we could often see the spot where we had camped the evening before. One day, after reaching the summit of a col, as we walked down on the farther side we could see open country with a broad river flowing through it which we thought must be the Brahmaputra. The landscape was clouded in smoke, but through my field glasses I could see Chinese lorries moving along the road beside the river. This came as a shock to all of us, for we had not known that there was a roadway through Lower Kongpo. Tsepa thought that this time we really must be near Tsela Dzong, where the river is too wide to be crossed using the limited means at our disposal; besides there was a large Chinese establishment there and a great many inhabitants. We were still traveling by day though taking great precautions. The land was much lower here and there were many secluded valleys where we could camp, so traveling was easier. People crossing these mountains had often built tall cairns to indicate the track; some of these from a distance looked alarmingly like human figures. As we turned farther to the east, being still on high ground, we could see a number of villages beside the Brahmaputra; in the evenings lights were visible; they seemed to be brighter than house lamps and we took it for granted that they were the headlights of Chinese vehicles. Our guide said that we were near Temo Monastery; he recognized the bend of the Brahmaputra. Therefore we would still have to keep to the mountains for a time, and moreover if we followed the bends of the river the distance would be much increased; in any case we would not be able to light fires in the daytime, and only at night by using great care to conceal them by digging holes in the ground. By now we were feeling the shortage of food very acutely and came to the conclusion that we must try to find a shorter route. We thought that where we now were was too dangerous, so we retreated to a more remote area. Now we mostly had to travel between sunset and midnight, for there were few bushes or any sort of cover. Our guide was bewildered again and led us over col after col. The old man who had been so ill before finally

dropped down and died; his son had done all possible to help him and had even carried his father over the worst passes. Suddenly another old man felt too exhausted to walk farther and insisted on going down to one of the villages. He promised not to divulge our whereabouts nor to tell anyone about the escaping party.

The landscape was beginning to change to more rocky and bare ground. We came across local tracks which we had to avoid and it was often difficult to find a suitable place to camp. Most of the party were showing signs of extreme fatigue, but all the same they kept up their spirits. After several more crossings on high ground Tsepa realized that we were approaching the Temo Pass on the Powo-to-Lhasa road. This meant that we must cross the road at the top of the pass and, in order to reach it, we must travel through the night. All the way lay under snow and it was impossible to avoid leaving tracks; unfortunately we could not reach the pass that same night and were forced to camp in the bitter cold hiding our fires with the greatest caution. Next evening we started off again; there were many animal tracks, but owing to the snow no people were traveling. At twilight we could see the pass beneath us, but we had to wait till it became dark and from our concealed position we watched and listened carefully for any possible travelers on the road. Though the snow was lying on the mountainside, the road itself was clear and we were able to cross it without mishap, though a man and horse must have passed earlier in the day, for their prints could be clearly discerned.

I had told everyone to walk in single file so that our tracks would not appear to belong to a very large party. We now needed to hurry on as quickly as possible to find somewhere where we could be concealed before daybreak; unfortunately the land here was very bare with little scrub and lay mostly under snow; it would have been easy for anyone to follow us, so we left a man to keep watch behind us and sent another scout ahead. The land was undulating and when we reached the higher places we could see for miles around, but the only thing to catch the eye was the track that we had made. Again we turned aside and found higher mountains in front of us, which appeared to be wild and uninhabited, so we could again travel by daylight. From the time that we crossed the road all the party had made a special effort to walk quickly; tired though we all were, we could not afford to stop and a few short rests taken at intervals had to suffice; the fact that everyone was on short commons made the strain all the greater. The all-important thing was to conserve our energies for the critical moment when we would have to cross the

main Chinese high road and, after that, the Brahmaputra. After several more days' traveling our guide again lost his way and we could only guess our direction. As we went we were faced with continuous ranges of mountains and valleys; there seemed no way to get through.

It has been mentioned before that people who were unable to carry all their own baggage often arranged for a stronger man to take the extra load by promising him half its contents at the journey's end. My own group now felt that they must fall back on their reserve of tsampa: To our dismay, we found that the man who had been carrying it had not only consumed his own share, but ours as well, and the same thing had happened in several other cases. Nevertheless, no one ever attempted to kill any of the wild animals that we came across in our wanderings; this compassionate self-control displayed by a whole band of desperately hungry people moved me greatly at the time, and it remains a treasured memory of those heart-searching days.

We were now quite lost, surrounded by rocks on every side; there was nothing left for me to do except to resort to takpa. The question that faced us was which rocks to choose for our next climb. Following the directions given by the takpa and after climbing the particular rock it indicated we saw a high mountain with a col on its shoulder. The snow was very deep and the sun dazzled us, but fortunately most of the party carried either dark goggles or eyeshades. Actually, the climb up was easier than the rough ground we had been crossing before, where we had had to jump from rock to rock; but the descent on the farther side to a lower level was very steep and there seemed no indication where to go next. It was again left to me to make a decision, so I headed for a small lake surrounded by rocky ground which we bypassed only to find ourselves confronted by three other ranges with rather steep cols leading gradually to lower ground. After this another line of mountains loomed ahead with a pass across which did not appear to be too steep. Tsepa and I always went ahead to direct the party and when we reached the top of this last pass we were amazed to see the Szechwan-to-Lhasa main road running along the mountainside below, less than a quarter of a mile away. I told everyone not to make any noise and to wait until I could find somewhere where we could all be hidden. This was not difficult on the boulder-covered ground, so when everyone else was safely under cover Tsepa and I went out to investigate our surroundings. Through field glasses we could see the road leading through the Serkyem Pass, which was actually the point that we had been aiming for;

once across it we knew we would be very near Lower Kongpo and the spot where we should try to cross the Brahmaputra.

When we returned to the others we found them all preparing for this, the most dangerous part of our journey. The older people were nervous, fearing that traveling on the south side of the river would prove too much for them and that, should they fall out by the roadside, the Chinese would be bound to find them and through them would trace the whole party. I told them that we must all cross over the road at the Serkyem Pass together and that the younger ones must carry the luggage to enable the older people to walk more quickly. If a Chinese lorry should come along when they were about to cross, everyone must lie down in the fosse beside the road and make no movement. We waited till dark before approaching the road, but when we were some twenty yards away from it we suddenly saw the headlights of a lorry. Fortunately there were a lot of rocks close at hand behind which we all ducked. I had to be very severe with one woman who, to help herself control her fear, was chanting mantras in a loud voice; I told her that she must only whisper under her breath. Since the road went in loops round the mountain we had time to take cover while the lorry was still some distance away; as it came nearer and nearer we could hear the crunching sounds of its gear changes and soon its headlights illuminated the very rocks where we lay concealed. We held our breaths and the minutes seemed like hours, but eventually the lorry passed out of sight and earshot. Just as we were on the point of getting to our feet for the dash across—one man was actually standing up—we heard the noise of a second lorry. As it came near we heard the Chinese talking in high-pitched and, as it seemed to us, excited voices; I was afraid it was because they had seen us; however, all was well and the lorry passed by. After a silence of about five minutes we all walked together across the road leaving two men to brush out our footsteps. On the farther side the ground was still rocky but became smoother as we worked our way down the valley; the air also felt much warmer. The discipline observed by everyone was beyond all praise; they looked very serious and no one spoke a word. After some three miles we turned into a side valley which was thickly wooded. We could still see parts of the road and would have been able to spot any approaching headlights; however, there seemed to be no further traffic on it. We walked upward through the valley to cross a pass in the mountains. The nun, who was the sister of the chöpön of Yak monastery, now completely broke down both physically and men-

tally; it would have been too dangerous for the whole party if we had stopped for her, so we gave her what little food we could spare and then left her: It was a horrid decision to have to take—it left a guilty feeling—but the safety of the whole party allowed of no other alternative. Generally speaking, the older refugees, by walking in a measured pace, had managed to save their energy for this especially dangerous time and they now walked in front, while it was the younger ones who lagged behind. I was feeling very exhausted myself; both Akong Tulku and Yak Tulku did their best to cheer me. The latter, however, was getting worn out by this continual going up and down mountains; he kept saying to me, "Rinpoche, what do you think we shall find behind this one?" I could only answer, "I don't know, perhaps we shall find a nice, warm, secluded valley." At last to shut him up I said, "Probably we will find another still higher snow mountain." That stopped him worrying.

After climbing the next chain of mountains we walked along the ridge for about two miles in a southerly direction. My opinion was that we ought to bear south, but our guide was most emphatic in urging us to follow a westerly course. After a time we came upon a little rocky hollow covered in small scrub where it was possible to camp; the ground was too uneven for people to lie comfortably, but we were all thankful to have found a place where we could stop. Immediately fires were got going, care being taken to screen them from sight. There was now sufficient time to stew down some of our leather; other refugees had previously taught us how to do it. The leather has to be soaked for a day until it swells, then cut in small pieces and stewed for several hours till it begins to sizzle and looks like meat. We still had a little tea, salt, and butter and after the first sip of our national beverage we all felt better. Yönten was the chief cook for our group and also did the serving. I was waiting to share the communal dish when he said, "We have kept a little *tsampa* especially for you." I asked him why, for I wished to share in everything on equal terms; he answered that leather was not suitable for his abbot to eat. I felt a little sad that this line had been drawn between me and the others; however, I discovered Akong Tulku and Yak Tulku's monks had done the same thing for them. By now, everyone seemed cheerful again and we slept in the hollow during the whole of the next day. Some of our men went up the mountain to spy out the land through field glasses; they could see the main Chinese road which we had just crossed and dozens of lorries full of soldiers traveling along it.

Some of the refugees were becoming a little careless about allowing their fires to smoke during the day and I had to be very firm with them. Toward evening we started off again to cross another range; the ground was covered with short grass and sloped down in easy stages; however, the wind was very cold and sharp. In the far distance we could see villages and far behind them a snow-covered range which we thought must lie on the farther side of the Brahmaputra. Starting off again next day we went farther down the slope toward the Lower Kongpo Valley through which the Brahmaputra flows, being much narrower at this point. This area was densely populated and there were villages halfway up the mountainside on the narrow strip beside the river, besides others in various branch valleys. The land was thickly covered with holly trees. We did not see a road nor did we hear any sounds of lorries; this was reassuring, since it would make things easier for us when trying to cross the great river. Between us and it there was a succession of low hills and valleys where there would be villages and we actually could see smoke coming from some of them, so we looked for a place where the mountain went directly down to the water's edge. Ahead of us there was a small closed valley covered with brushwood, but to go down to it over such rough ground could not be done in the dark; hearing the sound of men's voices and a dog barking we thought it would be unwise to go farther, so stayed where we were for the night. Next day I sent two men to investigate. They found a path leading downhill which, however, seemed to pass too dangerously near villages, so we changed our direction, fighting through thorny scrub until at last we found easier ground where only fir trees and holly grew; it was much warmer here. We went on until we noticed the smell of burning wood in the air; not daring to go farther we camped among the boulders. Again I sent men to look round and in the daylight I went with Tsepa and Ugyen Tendzin to see for myself. We thought that if we followed a spur running below us, this would get us down to the Brahmaputra without hindrance. However, we could only see the slope of the spur which hid the river, and we could not tell if there were any villages on the bank. Here was another problem: We would need coracles to cross the river. We had brought the leather of the two we used to cross the Nyewo, but it had been kept folded up and had become stiff as a result; it needed to be soaked for a long time and there were few streams in the neighborhood. I told my companions that we could at least go on for a few miles, for I felt sure

that there were no nearby villages, so we started in the evening. The footprint of a man was suddenly spied in the track and we came upon a watermill a few paces farther on; fortunately the men who worked the mill had already gone home for the night. Some of Repön's people, who were desperately short of food, suggested that they should break open the door, and if they found anything eatable they would take it and leave some money. I told them that this would give a clue which could only lead to our discovery. Farther on we came to a horse track and heard the sound of the bell on a passing horse. A murmur went through the party: They wondered if this was a Chinese or some villager; if the latter, they thought that perhaps he would sell them some food. Meanwhile the sound had ceased, so I said nothing. We crossed this local track; looking through my glasses, it seemed as if the rocky ground led straight down to the river, in which case it was time to get the coracles ready. We needed at least six more. We scouted round till we found a suitable place near a mountain stream where we were able to soak our coracle coverings together with other yak-skin bags; the whole camp joined in the work of making the frames and sewing together the pieces of leather under the superintendence of Ugyen Tendzin.

By this time there was little else but leather to eat; people's health was becoming affected and symptoms of illness were beginning to show. I was much concerned and tried to think if there was any way to obtain further supplies. There was a possibility that we might approach the villagers in some remote spot and find out if the Chinese were in control of their whole area or if there was any chance of buying some food; there was always the danger that one of the villagers might act as a spy. I put the suggestion to the senior members of our party; some of them thought that we might try, others considered the risk too great. Everyone more or less agreed, however, that we must first get across the river.

Making eight coracles took two days; we set off at nightfall. By now there was little baggage left and whatever remained was taken over by others to enable three men to be allotted to carry each coracle. I warned everyone that we would now be going through villages; we must take the greatest care and make no noise, with everybody walking in single file. In spite of all these difficulties the whole party kept up their spirits; they were really excited at the prospect before them. I led the file with Tsepa, who proved of the greatest help. Though he did not actually know this part of the country, he was familiar with the general layout of villages

and of the tracks joining them; there was no way of avoiding these, and though we saw lights in the houses, we met no one. As we made our way down these minor paths the coracles had to be carried aloft and were apt to scrape against the hedges making a crackling noise; it was also difficult to keep the babies quiet, which added to our anxieties. The distance proved longer than we had expected, so there was not sufficient time, that night, to attempt the crossing, find somewhere on the farther side where to hide, and dispose of the coracles. I, with Tsepa, Ugyen Tendzin, Yönten, and several others carrying one coracle decided to take a path which led up the mountainside again. We waited and waited for the rest of the party who had lagged behind, but no one appeared. We therefore went on uphill until we reached a place where we could hide our coracle among the holly trees and lie down ourselves. But sleep was impossible for me; I kept wondering why the rest of the party was lagging behind. At the first light of day we heard someone walking on the dry leaves; the sound came nearer and nearer. Tsepa had his gun ready; I jumped on him and said that there was to be no shooting. He asked me to make no noise. The footsteps came on and a man hove in sight; it turned out to be a messenger from our own party. He was delighted to have found us but said that he had also hoped to find two others of our men who were carrying a coracle, as they were not among the rest of the refugees who, having lost contact with us the night before, had found a hiding place in a holly thicket lower down the slope. His report on the way that some of the other people in the camp were behaving worried me greatly, for he told me that they had lighted fires and were not keeping sufficiently quiet. I sent him back with a message that rules had been laid down to save the lives of three hundred people and must be strictly adhered to. He was to tell everyone that as soon as it was dark we would join them and they must all be ready to start for the crossing.

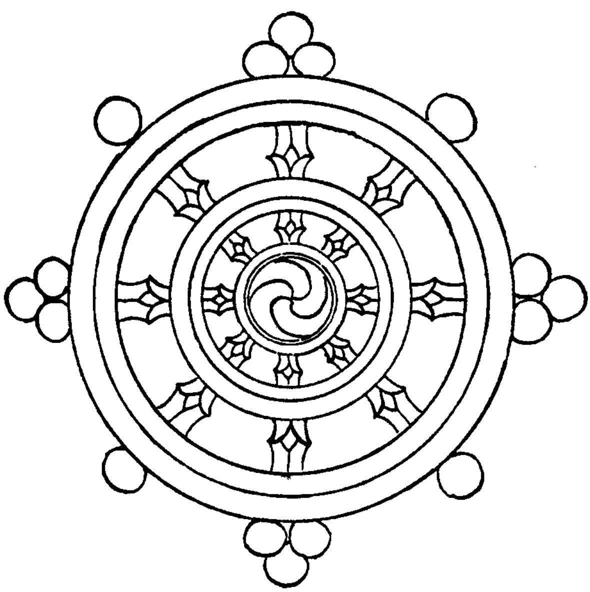
From our hollow we could not see very far and did not know if there were any houses near, but as the sun came up it looked as if we had found a good hiding place. However, we could not discover any water in the vicinity and all felt very thirsty, so Tsepa decided to go down to the lower camp to fetch some; there would be no difficulty on the way as there was plenty of cover between the two camps. He suggested that he might visit some of the villages pretending to be a local man, since he wore the clothes of the district, but I told him that this might lead to danger. While he was away Ugyen Tendzin and I took field glasses and

walked up the mountain to see how the land lay. We were at the end of the range and could see both banks of the Brahmaputra and the country on either side of it. At one point the river was fairly narrow but we would have to pass near a number of villages to reach it; we could see whitewashed temples flying red flags, and these were also to be seen over most of the houses. A backwater ran beside the farther bank of the river downstream from the likely crossing place, with a narrow strip of dry ground between it and the main channel which, being wooded, could afford adequate cover; at the end of the backwater there appeared to be a dry passage onto the mainland. The ground here was level for about a quarter of a mile and then sloped uphill toward another range of mountains. The track led through a village some two miles away on the lower slope of the mountains; here too, red flags were flying on the houses and a very large one was displayed on a white temple building. There were fields all around where herdsmen were tending their flocks. Taking everything into consideration we still thought that our best plan would be to cross the river at the narrow part, walk along the strip between it and the backwater, and go out by the end passage. We would have to risk going through the village just beyond.

In the afternoon we were feeling very depressed, the sun was hot and we were longing for something to drink. About four o'clock a black mass of crows started to wheel over us; their shadows fell across the mountain as the sun was sinking and their raucous caws sounded very sinister. We went back to our small party in the hollow and found that Tsepa had brought some water. He told us that a few of the refugees from the lower camp had gone out on their own to try to buy food and the villagers had told them that they had seen two men in chains whom the Chinese had arrested alleging that they had stolen a bullock: These must have been the men of our party who had disappeared with the coracles. The local people had realized that the men asking to buy food were trying to escape and they had no intention of getting involved beyond receiving payment for their supplies; however they gave the information that at this time of year all the passes on the farther side of the Brahmaputra would be blocked by snow.

There was no other solution for us but to go on. We waited till dark and then went down to the lower camp. I had given strict orders that everyone was to be ready to start, but when we reached the camp I found that they had not finished packing up and told them they must

hurry. As they were getting their baggage together my attendant found that a small bag of tsampa which had been kept for me had disappeared; his suspicion fell on a boy and losing his temper he started to chase him. Others tried to stop my attendant, unfortunately this angered him still more; everyone began to shout and to argue; the whole camp was in an uproar which further delayed the packing. I spoke very severely, for I saw that everyone was on the verge of hysteria. Catching my attendant by the arm I told him to control himself and explained that this was the most critical moment in our escape; every minute was valuable. The man was still agitated, but when he saw how very gravely I was looking at him, he calmed down and tried to explain that the boy had stolen my tsampa; I said, "I don't think that he has done so, but in any case, let him have it. At this time we all need strength, and I hope if he has taken the food that it will help him to work all the harder. What I am mostly concerned and distressed about is to hear that someone in the camp stole a bullock and that two innocent men are suffering for their crime."



The Wheel of Truth.

NINETEEN

Across the Himalaya

WE WERE NOW READY to start; it was the night of the full moon on December 15. Akong Tulku was carrying a very heavy load on his back and I asked him if he could really take so much, adding cheerfully, "It might end in your collapse." Laughingly, he replied, "This is the decisive night and I can do it; please remember that I am tougher than you." When we reached the level ground we could hear voices in the neighboring village and dogs barking in the far distance; however, we got as far as the sandy approaches to the river and everyone was hopeful. I went from group to group to encourage those in the rear to move more quickly and as I was walking between them I saw a man in Kongpo dress in front of me behind a thorn bush; as I looked at him he disappeared, but soon afterward I saw another man in the same costume who was carrying a rifle; I thought he might be Chinese as he had a very light skin. He too disappeared. I noticed that some groups of stragglers were going in the wrong direction so I had to rush after them to bring them back. At last my group reached the river and were the first to embark; eight of us got into one coracle with Ugyen Tendzin to paddle, followed closely by a second group. The full moon was just rising. It took some time to get across, though Ugyen Tendzin went as quickly as possible, and as soon as we disembarked he was ready to take the coracle back to fetch another lot of passengers. I heard a shout from the river from the man who was paddling another coracle; he was calling me by name and saying that he was unable to get across and they would all be drowned. I told him not to panic, it would be all right and

he carried on and landed his party. As I walked up and down the bank talking to the three groups who had arrived, I suddenly heard gunfire. At first I thought it must have come from one of our party; then a second shot was fired and I could hear shrill shouts from Chinese voices. The firing became continuous and bullets came whizzing above us. Some of the remaining refugees jumped into coracles and were able to get across. The firing still went on, becoming even heavier. Altogether about fifty people reached our side and we rushed up the strip between the river and the backwater, expecting to find the dry passage at the end of the water, but no one could locate it. Since the Chinese were evidently in force on the other side, we expected that there would also be some of them here, so all heavy baggage, such as bags containing coins and jewelry, was thrown into the water. Being unable to find the passage, we tried to wade across the backwater, but found it too deep, so some of the men went back to the riverbank to fetch the two coracles. These were now waterlogged and consequently very heavy and it took time to bring them. The men arrived at last and a few of us were paddled across. Everyone wanted to jump into the two coracles at once, so some had to be ordered to wait for the return journey, till finally all got across.

By this time it was near sunrise; many of the fugitives began to panic and rushed off on their own without waiting for me or anyone else to instruct them. Tsepa and his wife, Akong Tulku, Yak Tulku, Tsethar, Yak Tulku's and my attendants were the only ones near me and we started southward toward the mountains. Yönten was still paddling people across the backwater, so I did not see him. Tsethar lost his temper and accused me of trying to save too many people. He said that our best plan would be to try and find a hiding place nearby; we could then go down the strip again and try to collect some of the baggage that we had left on the bank of the river, for the firing had now died down. I begged him not to attempt it, for we had already climbed some way up toward a village. However he was determined to go and said that he would return with Yönten. I told him that we intended to walk up the mountain until we found a suitable place where we would hide. Akong Tulku's younger brother and a nun joined us; we were all utterly exhausted, having eaten hardly anything and the climb took a long time; to add to our discomfort, our clothes, which had been soaked through when we tried to wade across the backwater, began to freeze on us. As light broke in the sky we

could see the village in front of us. There were people on the balconies of the houses, some of whom looked like Chinese, and in the surrounding fields herdsmen were taking their animals out to the grazing grounds. But there seemed no better way than to creep through the village between the hedges and we succeeded in doing this without mishap. Beyond, a winding path led over a bare strip of chalky ground on which our dark clothing would be very visible and a herdsman who was driving his animals behind us seemed to be looking at us, but we took no further notice and simply went on in the same direction. From the higher ground we could see everything that was going on in the village and beyond it we had a good view of the river: A lot of people were still gathered beside the northern bank and had lighted fires. However, we pressed on and a little farther up the slope found ourselves in a belt of holly trees; knowing that if we went higher we would come to more open ground we decided to stay under cover of the trees, for we were all very nearly at the end of our strength. The mountain faced north; no sun shone on it and it was bitterly cold; our frozen clothes clung to us. Throughout the day we heard firing and saw people walking about in all directions; it was obvious that the Chinese were looking for us, we could hear their steps coming nearer and nearer and then dying away again as they altered their course. From the village, there were no sounds of cheerfulness and the herdsmen instead of singing as they took their animals out now merely shouted at their herds. There were intermittent sounds of firing from below, and of blasting where the new road was being made. In our hiding place among the holly trees we still had to be very careful, for the dry leaves on the ground crackled whenever we moved; we tried several times to open our food pack, but each time we had to abandon the attempt because of a sound of footsteps and the thumps of a rifle being used as a walking stick. Akong Tulku's baggage had had to be jettisoned, so I teasingly told him that I, being more modest, had been able to bring along mine. My attendant suggested that it was now the time to practice the yoga of "inner heat" (known as *tummo* in Tibetan), but Yak Tulku retorted that sitting down on the crackling holly leaves in order to take the cross-legged position required for this yoga would make too much noise, not to mention the sound of the accompanying breathing exercises. I had to laugh and Tsepa whispered, "Hush! You must all keep quiet, someone is coming." I whispered back,

"Perhaps this time, it is the spirits who are coming to protect us." This bantering helped us to relax.

The day seemed dreadfully long. There were sounds of firing near the village and we were afraid that the Chinese might have found some of our party. It was slightly warmer around midday and then became terribly cold again toward evening. We dared not open our food pack and there was no water. We could only moisten our lips with the hoarfrost.

About an hour after dark there were no further suspicious sounds to be heard, so we decided to walk on. Tsepa led the way in complete darkness and we climbed for about five hours until we reached the level of the fir trees. By this time we were completely exhausted and the cold was intense. However we found a little tsampa at the bottom of the food pack, and this, mixed with hoarfrost, made us feel slightly better; we could shelter in some hollow fir trunks and did our best to sleep. My attendant was magnificent; he was lying close to me and took this opportunity to talk about meditation. He said that the experience that he had just gone through had been a spiritual lesson for him; he was now feeling at ease and believed that our worst trials were behind us. I replied, "But what if we are captured tomorrow, one never knows? We are still in Chinese-occupied territory and their guards are hunting for us." He begged me not to speak about it. I said, "This is only talk; we may actually have to go through this experience and if so, will it still be a test of meditation for you?" Then I raised my voice to ask Yak Tulku if he did not agree. "What are you talking about?" he said. "We are talking about meditation and whether this will help us if the Chinese capture us tomorrow." He answered, "I am sure that the danger is over; what do you think lies beyond this mountain?" I gave the usual reply, "Another icy range, which will provide a still better opportunity for us to practice the yoga of inner heat, for this time we will be able to take up the correct posture"; this set everybody laughing. That night none of us could sleep; just before dawn we dozed off only to be awakened by a loud whisper from Tsepa. "Wake up! Wake up! Someone is coming." We all alerted. A voice was heard and the crunch of frost under feet: We could see an advancing figure. Tsepa had his gun ready; we others held our breath. I whispered to Yak Tulku, "You remember our conversation of last night." The steps faded and then came nearer again; Tsepa stood with his loaded rifle ready to fire.

My attendant and I implored him not to use it. Suddenly a woman's figure appeared followed by others; they were the peasant family who had joined us at Kino Tulku's monastery. Behind them were Tsethar and Yönten; they had seen our footprints clearly on the frost-covered ground.

When Tsethar had gone back to the bank of the Brahmaputra to try and salvage some of the baggage he had met Yönten. They wanted to join our little group, but daylight overtook them, so they found a hiding place before reaching the village and remained there until the next night. They were only a few yards from the track between the village and the backwater and could see the villagers, and the Chinese going in all directions to hunt for the refugees. They could hear them talking to each other and saying that quantities of musk, gold and silver jewelry, and sable skins had been found strewn along the backwater. They also spoke of having captured some of the refugees. Though they came quite close to where Tsethar and Yönten were hiding they failed to see them. It was quite warm in their hiding place so the two men were able to take off their wet clothes and dry them. They were very anxious about our group, and wondered if the talk about captured refugees referred to us. When night fell they started to go uphill again and, on the way, met the peasant family; all of them passed through the village in safety. Since they had found it so easy to follow our footprints, we felt it was hardly safe for us to stay any longer where we were.

It was now two days since we had crossed the river, and I will now follow my diary.

December 17. We could now travel by daylight, though whenever we heard a suspicious sound we halted immediately; however, we soon realized that these noises came only from wild animals. Tsethar suggested stopping for tea; he was afraid that we might break down. We dug a hole for the fire. Fortunately, we had some tea and butter left, though little else. The drink seemed a meal in itself and everyone had a good night.

December 18. Our walk today was over open ground. We could look down on the village and the river, but we felt that we ourselves were too far away to be spotted from below. Our party of fourteen started out together; but since we now thought that we were beyond pursuit by

the Communists, discipline became somewhat relaxed, with Tsethar, the peasant family, and my attendant lagging behind. From high up on the mountain we could see the many ranges that all our party had crossed together with such courage and determination, before we became separated at the Brahmaputra. We felt very sad, not knowing what had befallen our many friends and companions. We could clearly see both the river and its backwater, and through my field glasses I could distinguish a black patch which I took to be one of our coracles.

We did not stand for long on the skyline for fear of being seen, so the rest of us waited below the ridge while Tsepa went across to see what lay on the other side. He reported that it was a wild valley with no signs of a village, so we made our way down until we came to an obvious footpath which appeared to lead valleyward; on its surface we noticed prints of Tibetan boots which, however, on closer examination did not appear to be recent, so we followed the path down to the bottom. Here we espied a herdsman's hut where we thought we might shelter for the night, but when we reached it we were disappointed to find that it had fallen into ruins and no longer had a roof. Still it was a luxury to find a level field surrounded by rocks to protect us from the wind, with a stream nearby. This was our first opportunity to dry our wet clothes and to mend a few things: Here at last we could all relax and wash. With approaching darkness we set to and collected wood for a fire by which we sat, lighted by the last rays of the setting sun.

Tsepa knew nothing of the country on this side of the Brahmaputra so we turned once again to the exceptional form of divination known as prasena, from which a clear vision came. It told us that we were to go up the mountain on our right, when we would see another range ahead; three cols would be visible and we were to make for the center one: This would be the last high range that we would have to cross.

Yak Tulku was now convinced that we would reach India and gave a short talk of reassurance to our little party. In the evening with a good fire in this cozy valley we at last felt warmer, but at night it began to freeze again and by morning our clothes were stiff with frost.

December 19. We now had to climb another spur and were soon at snow level. As we went up, we could see villages some three to four miles away. This made us anxious, for our dark clothes could be so easily noticed against the white background, though the sun was on the villages

and we were in the shade on the north side of the range. The snow here was quite deep, in places dangerous as it had turned to ice, and we were afraid of slipping. It took the whole morning to reach the top. On the southern slope there was no snow; the mountain was covered with short slippery grass dotted about with rocks. It was hard going with no indication of any path. A small valley now lay ahead of us and beyond it a high steep glaciered range of mountains where we could see three cols; we believed that the center one was the col indicated by prasena; it looked quite near but the climb up was quite a long one. The higher we climbed the deeper the snow became. Tsepa and Yönten were the only really strong men in our party, so we could not adopt the method we had used before in very deep snow. Now these two men went first and the rest of us followed as best we could; the ascent was very laborious and took most of the afternoon. To make matters worse, a snowstorm burst over us toward evening, covering the ice with snow. We kept cheerful and eventually reached the top at an altitude of about nineteen thousand feet above sea level. Rising almost perpendicularly to the east of our pass was Mount Namcha Barwa or the Blazing Mountain of Celestial Metal; its crest glittered far above the clouds, for this mountain is over 25,000 feet high (see photograph on page 197).

As we looked back along our path we saw that five cairns had been built at a lower level, so this track was obviously the right one.

The storm had now passed and the sun was shining again. When we looked down on the south side we saw that we were surrounded by snowy peaks with behind them range after range of lower mountains reaching into the far distance in every direction; these looked a smoky blue color as if covered by a jungle of trees; we thought that the most distant ones might be in Indian territory.

At our feet the ground looked very rough; it appeared to be a moraine with a series of rocks showing deep patches of snow between them. There was no way of bypassing this stretch; we had to go straight down it. The whole place seemed completely desolate, without even traces of wild animals. The surface was appallingly slippery; Yak Tulku slid down in a sitting position for about fifty yards and was only stopped by a small rock within a few feet of a sheer drop. Farther down the gradient became, if anything, even steeper; we seemed surrounded by cliffs and could see no way of getting by them. Looking back we could see that had we attempted to cross either of the other two cols it would

have been disastrous, for glaciers fell away steeply on this side of them; so though our own position was far from pleasant, any other way would have been worse. It was getting near nightfall and dislodged stones were falling on the people in front. We decided to get out of line and to search individually for any possible pathway. Tsepa suddenly shouted that he thought he had found a way down. It led downward through a slight depression between two almost perpendicular rocks. Following in Tsepa's track we came to a cave surrounded by bushes. By now it was quite dark and since we felt that we were safe from any possible unpleasant encounters we made a glorious blaze and spent the evening in devotional chanting. The nun still had some butter, Akong Tulku's young brother some tea, and both Yönten and the peasant family a little tsampa, so we had all the basic necessities. This was the first night since the beginning of our escape that I slept really peacefully.

December 20. We were desperately short of food, so we could not afford to delay. As we walked down in the morning we looked at a stretch of snow-covered ground surrounding a large lake. We made our way beside it and a little farther on suddenly found ourselves at the edge of a steep escarpment which at first appeared to be impassable. However there was a crack running down it which, though abrupt, had an uneven stony surface affording a reasonably firm foothold; the younger people among us helped those who found it too difficult. Once we got to the bottom everything looked easy, for we were in a small valley with a frozen stream running through it and there was much less snow. The country was completely deserted with no sign of human habitation, the only living creatures being wild animals such as deer, foxes, etc. We chose a sheltered camping place among rocks, from where we could see distant woods of holly and fir.

December 21. In the morning we noticed a large patch of green which we took for field of grass, but when we reached it we found to our horror that it was a large muddy swamp which could not be crossed. We tried to walk around it; this presented further difficulties, for the whole land was covered with a very prickly kind of thorn bush which had to be hacked through with every available knife or sword. This was particularly arduous work and took a long time. Toward evening we reached the junction of two rivers. There was evidence here of recent footprints.

We thought that this might be a track leading to Doshong Pass and that Chinese might be in the neighborhood, though the footprints were clearly of Tibetan boots. That night we camped among reeds and trees beside the river.

December 22. As we went on I felt more and more puzzled, for everything looked somehow strange. It was all utterly unlike anything I had known hitherto; the air was much warmer and there were so many unknown trees. We were obviously getting near to an inhabited part of the country. That evening, as we sat round the fire, we held counsel together. The question was whether, if we were within reach of a source of food supplies, we could now allow ourselves to consume more of the slender remains of our food, or whether, if the Chinese were in the district, we must ration ourselves yet more severely. Someone suggested that if the Chinese were indeed here, it might be best to surrender, for we were in a poor state of health after so many acute privations and were near starvation. However, most of the party felt sure that there were no Chinese in the vicinity and, even if there were, they said that at all costs we must not surrender but must still make every effort to escape. That night, while trying to sleep, we heard many strange noises and at first were greatly disturbed, until we realized that they only came from the wild animals around us.

December 23. We had been continuously going up and down the mountain slopes and now hoped to find easier ground. However, with every step the way seemed to become more difficult; the ground was again rougher and the mountains steeper; the trees here grew much taller. In places we had to negotiate great rocks, only able to be crossed by narrow footholds, with rusty chains for support, which reminded me of the track to Rigong Kha; the streams merely had log bridges of the most primitive kind. It was so tiring jumping from rock to rock that I was beginning to feel at the end of my tether, hardly knowing how to go on; but I dared not tell this to anyone for fear of discouraging them. We camped in a little cave and again saw traces of the same footprints as before. Our tsampa and butter were now all but gone, though we still had some tea; Tsethar remarked that we would have to reach a village within a day or so, otherwise we would all die. A voice called out, "Be a strong Khampa and don't lose heart," and everyone laughed.

December 24. Our journey now took us through yet stranger country; there were all sorts of trees forming a dense jungle with no level spaces; a tangle of mountains with continual rain and mist. For the first time we saw banana trees, but did not know that the fruit was edible and dared not experiment. The rain poured in torrents all day, splashing up from the ground as it fell. Toward evening we found quite a nice cave with many signs that travelers had used it before. We now had nothing left except tea and a few leather bags. However, we could make a good fire and really enjoyed this meager fare. I was touched to find that Yönten had still kept a small quantity of tsampa for me. After we had eaten, Tsepa volunteered to go down to see if he could find a village where he could get some food; he and the peasant husband went off together. He said that if he could find a village that night he would return to us with supplies, but if no village was near, we were to come on next day and he would meet us on the way. About an hour after he left, we heard the report of a gun; then nothing further. We felt very anxious.

December 25. We stayed in the cave all day and kept up our spirits by chanting as we cooked our leather; it was such a luxury to have a fire and we stayed on in the cave that night.

December 26. With the morning light we started off and walked down the slope and as we turned uphill again we met the peasant husband carrying a large bag of tsampa. To our amazement he said that he and Tsepa had overtaken Akong Tulku's elder brother in company with Dorje Tsering's wife and three nuns and they had given him the tsampa to tide over our immediate needs. They told him how they had been captured by the Chinese near the backwater, but managed to escape from the headquarters where they were being held and had afterward joined up with some Kongpo peasants who were also escaping. The party had heard Tsepa's gun the night before and had been so frightened that they had rushed away. It appeared that the gun had only been fired to scare a wild animal which seemed as if it might attack. Tsepa had sent the peasant husband back to us while he himself went up to the village on the mountainside to buy provisions. He sent us a message saying that we were to go to a cave below that place where the other party was waiting for us; he would join us there later with the food. We soon reached the cave and spent a very happy morning telling each other of our experiences. They

told us that a group of them had crossed the river and the backwater and had tried to follow us; however, they had lost their way and after lying hidden in the long grass for a time they reached the village. When the Chinese discovered them, there was no fighting; all the refugees were taken prisoner and removed to a village which was a local Chinese headquarters, on the south side of the Brahmaputra. Their baggage was thoroughly searched; all the contents of their amulet boxes were thrown out and all religious books were immediately destroyed. Each person was privately questioned to find out if their stories tallied; they were asked where they came from and where they were going. Most of them said that they were trying to escape to India, though a few said that they were going on pilgrimage to that country. The lamas and leaders were separated from the rest and put under guard to be interrogated more closely. They were given the most menial work to do, such as cleaning out latrines. One of the lamas despaired and hanged himself; he had already escaped from one prison camp in Derge and this was the second time that he had been captured. As other prisoners were brought into the camp all our party were relieved to find that no members of our little group were among them; but when the Chinese could not trace Akong Tulku, Yak Tulku, or me among the senior prisoners, they thought we might be lurking disguised among the crowd, since they knew that we had been the leaders of the party; so the prisoners were checked again, especially the younger ones.

At night everyone was locked up together in a single room, but women and the less important men were allowed to go out into the village during the day: They were, however, called in for individual questioning from time to time. The Chinese would then tell them that now that Lhasa was liberated they could go there whenever they wished to, there would be no trouble on the roads; but of course there were more useful things to be done than wandering off on pilgrimages, which were indeed only superstition. The prisoners were even told that should they wish to go to India for this purpose, the Chinese administration were quite ready to let them out; however, such a journey would be exceedingly dangerous, for anyone might die of starvation or fall ill from the hot climate there.

When a rumor went round the camp that all the able-bodied refugees were shortly to be sent north to join labor camps on the other side of the Brahmaputra and that the senior people and those too old for work

were to be sent to concentration camps, one of the nuns contrived to buy food for herself and Akong Tulku's brother; she also obtained information about the best way to reach Doshong Pass. Dorje Tsering's wife and two other nuns were also able to procure some food and all five managed to escape together. They stopped in a wood the first night and crossed the Doshong Pass the following day. Here they met the family from Kongpo who knew the country and were also making their escape, so they joined forces.

The Kongpo family were camping in a valley below our cave and the man came up to see me, bringing a jug of soup made of meat and barley which we much appreciated. He told me how he and his people had escaped: It had been very difficult to get out of their village as permits were only given to visit friends in the near neighborhood and when the visit was over the holder had to apply to the local authorities for permission to return to his own home. Having obtained the permits to leave his village, our friend and his family took the opposite direction toward the mountains to the south. A number of the villagers had wanted to do the same thing, but knowing the danger they would have to encounter in crossing the snowbound Doshong Pass, they had not dared to undertake the journey.

Some refugee lamas from Lower Kongpo were sheltering in the small monastery in the village above our cave. A monk came down with Tsepa to request me to conduct a devotional service for them as well as for the villagers. I was surprised to see him wearing a long dagger which looked somehow wrong for a monk. He was particularly friendly and invited us all to stay in the monastery. However, we felt that this village was too near Lower Kongpo and might not be a safe place for us so, seeing that one could not get to the monastery and back again that same afternoon, we stayed where we were in and around the cave. We had an excellent meal with some pork the villagers had supplied and made dumplings with their wheat flour which they also gave us. We tried the local dish of millet, but found this difficult to swallow.

December 27. Some of our party had bought roast corn from the villagers, which we nibbled throughout the day; unfortunately we had not realized that it would swell up inside us and this, followed by a meal of fat pork, gave us all severe stomachaches, so that none of us were able to sleep that night. However, we were all feeling comforted, for we thought that

this part of the country was too wild and unproductive to be of much interest to the Communists. A year later, however, the Chinese occupied these frontier regions, including this part.

December 28. The Kongpo refugees remained in the vicinity, while we resumed our journey. There are a great many holy mountains in this district which is called Pemakö; Guru Padmasambhava used to meditate in its caves and Tibetans have often come here as hermits and pilgrims to practice meditation.

There were many small villages dotted about and we passed through wild valleys and crossed streams by very primitive bamboo bridges. That night we camped on the bank of a stream.

December 29. Today it was very hard going, for our way led up and down slopes covered with large rocks; in some cases rough steps had been hewn, in others, it was the old story of narrow nitches cut in the rock faces. There were trees and undergrowth everywhere and we could not see anything of the country around us. To add to our discomfort it was raining very hard and we were wet through before we could stop for the night.

December 30. In one of the villages which we passed we stopped to rest and some of the villagers, who appeared to be very poor, welcomed us bringing small rice cakes cooked in oil as well as a local beer also made from rice; as the drink was fermented we were unable to accept it and this rather upset their sense of hospitality. We were much interested when one of the peasants took us up the hill to show us how he grew his corn. This required immense labor, for there were only small patches among the rocks on the mountainside where it could be sown, and it was always in danger of being eaten by the many wild animals about the place; to protect it he had built small well-thatched sheds from where he could keep watch against them. We spent the night on a little hill where there was water.

December 31. When we woke up in the morning we could see our next objective, a village high up on the slopes on the other side of the river. We crossed this by a slender bamboo bridge and, beyond it, found ourselves on steep hard ground. There were no rocks, but footholds had

been cut on the stony surface in a zigzag pattern to make the climb easier. As we went farther up we could see the Brahmaputra again, now on its southwestward course: The ranges on its south side looked very beautiful with patches of cloud and little groups of houses dotted about. These foothills of the Himalayas have a continual rainfall and everything looked wonderfully green. We could not recognize most of the plants here for they were utterly different from those which grow in East Tibet. We later learned that this is the best time for traveling, for in the winter there are no snakes nor leeches about. Our climb was very arduous and from the time that we had crossed the river there was no water to be had anywhere until we reached a village called Pedong late in the afternoon. I had sent a messenger ahead of the party to ask if we could be given accommodation for a couple of weeks; when we arrived we received a warm welcome and were able to rent rooms in various houses.

I, together with my attendant, Yönten, Tsepa and his wife, and the peasant family stayed in the headman's house; our host gave me his best room and that evening he himself cooked our meal. Some of the dishes were made of stewed leather, which is largely eaten in this area; being now nicely cooked with spices and vegetables I did not even realize that it was leather. For drink he gave us an alcoholic liquor made from wheat and, when I asked for tea, he told me that no water was available that night and that this drink would be good for us after our long journey, since we must be worn out and in need of rest. As monks do not touch alcohol we did not drink it, however, and pretended that the soup had been enough to quench our thirst, which disappointed our host. He was a very gentle and friendly man anxious to help us in every way; moreover he knew Tibetan and acted as interpreter to all our party, for the villagers only spoke the local dialect.

January 1. I took a walk in the country outside the village and was shocked to see some little boys hunting birds which they took home and roasted in their kitchens. When I spoke about this to our host he said it was difficult to stop people from doing it as it was the custom. Akong Tulku and Yak Tulku had had the same experience as ourselves in refusing the alcoholic drink, but after we had walked around together and seen for ourselves the scarcity of water, we understood the position better, for the villagers had to walk a long way down to the valley and then dig a hole, into which water would slowly trickle. This work was

generally done by the women. The villagers' chief industry was very fine and artistic basketwork colored with beautiful vegetable dyes.

During the following days I had many talks with the local people; they considered themselves to be Buddhists, though all this area still showed traces of the ancient Bön religion. There were temples in the villages, but the priests in charge were singularly lax; they had never received any training, and the way to celebrate the rites had merely been handed on orally from father to son. They were all married and led more or less worldly lives. For the devotional ceremonies, the fathers of the household and their sons joined with the priest in charge, while the women and children looked on, and these assemblies generally included the serving of alcoholic drinks to all by the women. Though this part of the country had been considered holy since the eighth century, latterly pilgrims who came to meditate in the neighboring caves rarely went near the small villages so that the indigenous people seldom had any contact with instructed Buddhists.

In the eighth century when Buddhism first began to spread into Tibet practices such as the worship of nature spirits and the animal sacrifices of the Bön religion were forbidden and many Bönpo adherents emigrated to the outlying regions of the Himalayas, both to the Pemakö district and to parts of Nepal, for they could not go to India which at that time was largely Buddhist. However, after Buddhism had become universal in Tibet the inhabitants of the Pemakö area took shelter under the name of Buddhism, though still practicing some of the Bön rites. On the other hand in the eastern province of Kyungpo the people still call themselves Bönpos, though their practice is Buddhist in effect; they are known as "White Bönpos."

In 1950 Düdjom Rinpoche, a renowned teacher of the Nyingma order or "order of the ancients" came to Pemakö. He had already established a monastery in Upper Kongpo and wished to found a second one here with a good library, his chief object being to train monks so that they might instruct the local people in the real teachings of Buddhism; in their isolation they had sadly lapsed and reform was necessary. Among other things he introduced cows, so that the villagers need not be solely dependant on hunting wild animals for food. He knew the local dialect and could mix with and teach the people himself.

The villagers told me how much it had meant to them having his monastery there to take a lead in this much-needed work of reform. At

one time they had had a Tibetan monk-official as administrator of the district; later, the Chinese had also established a headquarters in this area, but had withdrawn after two years; they had made very little impression on the people. All were now very anti-Chinese and were prepared to fight for their liberty, if only with primitive bows and arrows. They had made plans to build bridges in such a way that they could be demolished at the very moment when the Chinese would be crossing them.

There was no possibility of getting any milk and, since it was winter, vegetables were in very short supply; there was nothing left for us, therefore, but to fall in with the local custom of drinking beer, of which the villagers had large quantities. This, combined with better food and rest, certainly renewed our health. When our fortnight was up we were ready to go on with our journey.

January 14. After about four hours' walking we came to the next village. We had already met many of the inhabitants and they had prepared accommodation for all of us. Here the houses were brighter and more cheerful and the people wore better clothes. I met a lama who had escaped from Upper Kongpo with a number of peasant refugees. His account of the Chinese persecution was the usual sad one. This party had traveled by a different route to the one we had taken.

January 15. The next village lay farther away. Mostly we were following the Brahmaputra, but all the villages were situated on the slopes of the mountains. A bridge that we saw over the river was different from any we had yet seen; it was made of very wobbly bamboo wattle; bamboo hoops placed at intervals round it served to help the passenger to keep his balance. This village had some contact with the Indian side of the Himalayas, and consequently there were certain Indian goods to be seen, I was amused to meet men wearing pyjamas. Indian coinage was partly in circulation here and cuttings of Indian pictures from newspapers were often stuck on the walls. The specialty of this village was making a particular poison to put on their arrowheads which paralyzed the animals they hunted. The women sat on their balconies all busily engaged in spinning and weaving. The majority of the inhabitants only spoke the Mön dialect; however, some of the older ones knew Tibetan and we were welcomed and put up for the night. We were told that a detach-

ment of Indian guards had been stationed near the village who had invited all the villagers to join in their New Year festivities on January 1, and the people had been very interested to see Indian airplanes in the vicinity.

I met the priest who was living with his family in the local temple; he could speak Tibetan and was proud of the fact that he had visited many places in Tibet. He told me that he had been in retreat and that its chief benefit had been an increase of magical power. We had an argument and I pointed out to him that Buddhism teaches that one must go beyond selfish aims: A retreat should be to increase spiritual awareness; one must start with the five moral precepts. He courteously agreed, after which we both remained silent. Yak Tulku, who had been much scandalized by the corrupt habits of these people was delighted that I had had an opportunity to expound a truly Buddhist way of life. He said that, had he been talking to this priest, he would probably have lost his temper and said something rude.

January 16. We started on a long trek, passing several villages until we came to the last one on Tibetan territory where we camped by the riverbank. We were delighted to have water to drink and I now made it a rule that in future no beer was to be taken; I was afraid that some of the younger people were growing too fond of it.

January 17. Our party of nineteen started out very early. It was impossible to keep close to the Brahmaputra as the bank was too rocky, so we had to walk along the mountainside above it. The top of the next pass was the boundary between Tibet and India. We were still uncertain how we would be received by the guards there. There was a big noticeboard facing us painted in the colors of the Indian flag, with large letters in Hindi saying "Bharat" and English letters saying "India." Below, we saw a newly built stupa made of concrete and whitewashed; its presence was encouraging. The two men on guard showed their welcome as they shook hands with us though we could not speak each other's languages. We felt intensely happy at this moment and particularly so in seeing the stupa, symbol of Buddhism, on Indian soil.

We walked down a further mile to the check post. The soldiers there confiscated Tsepa's gun and my field glasses and in sign language indicated that we should go farther down the mountainside and not stay

where we were. There were various soldiers traveling on the road and we heard an airplane overhead. Feeling tired after our long day, we camped beside a small stream. In the middle of the night a soldier came with an interpreter to see what we were up to. He merely woke us up, looked round, and went away.

January 18. Early in the morning another soldier came to our camp and, seeing our warm fire, sat down beside it. He was smoking and offered us some of his cheroots; we accepted them because we did not like to refuse his kindness, but none of us smoked. We watched him with the greatest interest; he was so different from any Tibetan type, with his pointed nose, deep-set eyes, and mustache. Not long after a second soldier arrived; he looked more like a Tibetan and could speak our language; he said he was a Bhutanese. He had heard of Gyalwa Karmapa and told me that his party had arrived in India before the Dalai Lama left Lhasa and, to our great sorrow, he added that Khyentse Rinpoche of Dzongsar had died.

A messenger came from the army camp, which was about a quarter of a mile away, to tell us to go on to the camp where we would be looked after. When we reached it we were shown into the dak bungalow which was entirely built of bamboo and the walls were covered with basketwork. Everything was beautifully arranged with bathroom, etc., and a fully equipped kitchen. We were told that we must rest and were given rice and tinned food. We discovered that it was the adjutant of the Indian regiment stationed there who was personally looking after us; he spoke Tibetan fluently and asked for all our names. He understood that we had been abbots of important monasteries and told me that he had been privileged to meet many lamas who had come by this pass and that he himself was a Buddhist.

January 19. In the morning the adjutant came with his senior officer. They made a list of everything that we had brought with us and asked particulars about the route that we had taken and at what date we had left our monasteries.

January 20. The adjutant brought us temporary permits to show the Indian authorities at the airport. He explained that they had little food to spare at the camp as they were rather short themselves; but he gave us

what he could and told me that we should always stay in the local dak bungalows. Before leaving he asked for my blessing.

January 21. The road here was much better; and the bridges more strongly built with steel cables. On the way, we met an Indian official traveling on his district rounds, with no less than five porters to carry his baggage. He was very sympathetic about our having had to leave our own country and assured us that the Indian government would look after us, just as they were looking after the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan refugees. His interpreter, the headman of the local village, looked very proud of himself in his uniform. This was the country of a primitive tribe who worship nature spirits and the whole atmosphere here seemed quite different from anything we had known before, with no obvious influences either from Tibet or the Indian side. There was much greater poverty in the villages and the dak bungalow where we stopped for the night was very small. There were, however, a few people here who had worked in India among Tibetans, and I asked them to teach me a few useful Hindi words.

January 22. We reached the town of Tuting round about midday and were shown a bamboo shelter where we could stay the night. Due to the rainy weather, here too there was a shortage of food and we were told that if we could manage on our own small supplies it would be a good thing. In the town there was a large camp of different races, all engaged on building houses for the army and the government officials in the area. There were quite a number of shops and small restaurants, and we were able to buy a few necessities, changing our Tibetan coins into Indian currency.

January 23. No one knew how we could get to India proper, for there was a waiting list for the few airplanes flying to and fro. However, we no longer felt anxious: We were free at last and were able to wander about the town at will. I was struck by the fact that people here were much gayer and more cheerful than in the Communist-controlled Tibetan towns. As we were having our midday meal, a messenger came to tell us to go down to the airport, as there was every possibility that we would get a lift that same evening. A tractor arrived with a trailer behind it, into which we all bundled. The winding road led through a valley and we

came to the gate of the airport. It was built in decorative Tibetan style, surmounted by the ashoka emblem. We disembarked and waited. No one knew of any airplanes likely to arrive that day. The evening drew in and it was quite dark. A jeep came to take me to see the local district administrator; he gave me a bag of rice and a few vegetables and apologized that supplies were so scanty and the accommodation so limited. However, he was sure that the plane would come the next day. He asked me to leave my blessing in the place, that things should go well. I thanked him and presented him with a white scarf. We spent that night in the hut.

January 24. In the morning an official came and read out a list of our names. He told us that we would be given priority on the next plane. It arrived that morning and, since it was a transport plane, its cargo of building material was first taken off and seats screwed in afterward. There was only room for six of us: myself, my own attendant, Yak Tulku and his attendant, Tsethar, and Yönten; the rest of the party followed in a second plane that same day.

This, our first flight, was a strange new experience, skimming over cloud-covered mountains, seeing far below us the small villages and footpaths leading up to them; only by the moving shadow of the plane on the ground could we gauge how fast we were traveling.

We thought about the teaching of impermanence; this was a complete severance of all that had been Tibet and we were traveling by mechanized transport. As the moments passed, the mountain range was left behind, and the view changed to the misty space of the Indian plains stretching out in front of us.

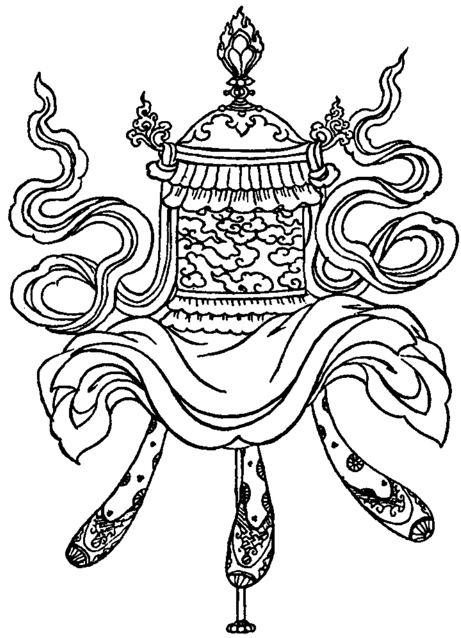
Ugyen Tendzin had waited until he had taken the last fugitives across the Brahmaputra backwater; then he escaped himself. It had been easier for him to travel as a single man and he had followed the Brahmaputra all the way and reached India about a month later. Some of Repön's party, including himself, succeeded in getting away from the Chinese camp and arrived in India some months later, where he is now.

A few of the refugees from Drölma Lhakhang, after crossing the backwater, managed to escape capture and they also made their way to India.

Lama Riwa's party which had stayed at Rigong Kha and went on by

the Yigong Valley were all captured by the Chinese, but escaped, reaching safety after a very difficult journey.

Nothing has been heard of Karma Tendzin, the queen of Nangchen and her party, nor of Lama Ugyen's group of monks who went to the pilgrimage valley.



The banner of victory.

*Song of the Wanderer in Powo Valley**

To the one greater than all the gods, beyond compare,
O Padma Tri-me, remembering your deep kindnesses,
Sad songs of love and irresistible devotion,
Among the rocks and snows and lakes, well up in me.

I see the snowy mountain reach to heaven
Pagoda-like, the clouds are its necklaces;
But when the red wind of evening scatters them,
How sad to see its body naked and bare.

This lake of liquid sky, the earth's great ornament,
The measure of the fullness of my mind—
When fish and otter fight there for their lives,
How many drops of blood are spread upon it.

Mortal, yet once we enjoyed the masquerade;
Now we see clearly all things perishing.
The Powo Valley is a charnel ground,
I, Chögyam, will leap and dance toward the east.

The red-headed vulture on the graveyard tree,
The crocodile who sleeps in the graveyard waters—
How brave they are, devouring human corpses,
Not knowing another preys on their own dead flesh.

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*The Powo Valley is the name given to the whole surrounding district; Padma Tri-me is the personal name of my guru.

In this dark age, when nephew slaughters uncle,
And neighbors all are barbarous enemies,
And everywhere the poison fog seeps irresistibly;
I call time and again upon my Guru Father,
And his face of kindness, real beyond alteration,
Unborn, undying, rises from my heart.

Out of all time, he utters the highest teaching,
And I go forth to freedom, his only son.

Epilogue to the 1977 Edition

Planting the Dharma in the West

Seventeen years after my departure from Tibet, I am writing this in Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, where I am conducting the 1976 Vajradhatu Seminary for 130 advanced students, instructing them in meditation and the journey of the three yanas. Looking back, my thoughts are filled with appreciation for my teachers and tutors and the powerful world of Tibet. There is some sense of desolation, of aloneness, but I would not call it nostalgia. I have never felt nostalgic about anything. What I feel now is a sense of maturity.

My stay in India from 1959 to 1963 was filled with fascination and inquisitiveness. By contrast to the medieval world of Tibet, India was a very modern place. Here for the first time I had contact with Westerners, and I realized that it was absolutely necessary for me to study their language in order to spread the dharma. During this period I served as spiritual advisor to the Young Lamas Home School, a role to which I was appointed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Forced from their homeland, many of my people seemed to have scattered their spirit and dignity; without the presence and activity of His Holiness's Tibetan government-in-exile, things would have been much worse.

While in India, I had the opportunity to meet with Prime Minister Nehru as well as President Radhakrishnan. Both were impressive men, philosopher-statesmen who combined, with no incongruity, spiritual quality and political ability. Outstanding among the many Westerners I

met was Freda Bedi, now Sister Karma Kechog Palmo, who worked with the Central Social Welfare Board of the Indian government overseeing the Tibetan refugees. She extended herself to me as a sort of destined mother and savior. In Kalimpong I met John Driver, a man who impressed me both by his insight and brilliance as well as by his remarkable devotion to Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. He tutored me in English and definitely inspired me to go eventually to Europe to teach. At the same time, I realized there was much more to learn about Western culture. Through John Driver, Freda Bedi, and the Tibet Society of the United Kingdom, I received a Spalding sponsorship in 1963 to attend Oxford University, with Akong to accompany me. We sailed from Bombay to Tilbury aboard the P & O Line, an exciting journey made even more so by being completely surrounded by Westerners.

My first impression of England was that it was very clean and orderly and, on the whole, very strange—unlike anything I had ever seen before. Arriving at Oxford was a moving experience. Coming from Tibet and India, one's preconception of the West was of a stark modern realm, but it turned out to have its own dignified culture, which I began to appreciate while living and studying at Oxford. My stay there was quite good, apart from the air pollution, and I learned a great deal. Among other subjects, I studied comparative religion and philosophy; with John Driver's help, the reading of Plato and other Western philosophers became fascinating, in spite of my difficulty in following some of the lectures. The fine arts in particular intrigued me. The manner in which recent Western art cut through all hesitations to freely express whatever strange things came out of one's head was certainly different from the oriental tradition in art. Occasionally, I visited London and the museums.

But there was also a sense of dissatisfaction. My ambition was to teach and spread the dharma. I was strongly encouraged by visits to Prinknash Monastery and Stanbrook Abbey, which demonstrated that the contemplative life could be carried out in the West. With the great help and inspiration of Esmé Cramer Roberts, the first edition of *Born in Tibet* was published in 1966. Nevertheless, there was as yet no situation in which I could begin to make a full and proper presentation of the teachings of Buddhism. This now began to change. Ananda Bodhi, senior incumbent of the English Sangha Vihara and founder of a Buddhist contemplative center in Scotland called Johnstone House, proposed turning

the direction of the House over to myself and Akong. The Johnstone House trustees invited us up to conduct a retreat. At once the fresh air and beautiful rolling hills of Dumfriesshire invigorated me and filled me with joyous expectation. After a series of further visits, Johnstone House was finally turned over to us and we moved in, giving it the name of Samye Ling Meditation Centre. This was a forward step. Nevertheless, it was not entirely satisfying, for the scale of activity was small, and the people who did come to participate seemed to be slightly missing the point.

In 1968 I was invited by the royal family of Bhutan to pay a visit—I had been providing tutoring in Buddhism to the young crown prince, Jigme Wangchuk, now the king of Bhutan, who was then studying at Ascot. Before reaching Bhutan, I stayed for a few days at the Central Hotel in Calcutta where I had the good fortune to meet Father Thomas Merton. He was in Calcutta attending some kind of collective religious conference, and he was appalled at the cheapness of the spiritual values that various of the conference participants were advocating. Father Merton himself was an open, unguarded, and deep person. During these few days, we spent much time together and grew to like one another immensely. He proposed that we should collaborate on a book bringing together sacred writings of the Catholic and Vajrayana Buddhist traditions. Father Merton's sudden death shortly thereafter was a tremendous loss, to me personally and to the world of genuine spirituality.

Traveling on to Bhutan, I was warmly greeted by Her Majesty the Queen. Throughout my visit Her Majesty, who is now the Queen Mother, accorded me overwhelmingly kind hospitality. Also, the royal family had selected as their spiritual advisor Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, whom I now met again with a very full heart.

Of tremendous significance to my future activity were the ten days of this visit which I spent in retreat at Tagtsang. Tagtsang is the place in Bhutan where, over a thousand years ago, Guru Rinpoche (Padmasambhava) first manifested himself in the wrathful form of Dorje Trolö and subjugated evil forces before entering Tibet. Since I had never been to Central Tibet or seen the great holy places of Guru Rinpoche or of the Kagyü forefathers, this visit to Tagtsang was very moving for me. The place is spacious and awe-inspiring, and one can still feel the presence of Guru Rinpoche. During my retreat there I was able to reflect on my life and particularly on how to propagate the dharma in the West. I invoked

Guru Rinpoche and the Kagyü forefathers to provide vision for the future. For a few days nothing happened. Then there came a jolting experience of the need to develop more openness and greater energy. At the same time there arose a feeling of deep devotion to Karma Pakshi, the second Karmapa, and to Guru Rinpoche. I realized that in fact these two were one in the unified tradition of mahamudra and ati. Filled with the vivid recognition of them and their oneness, I composed in two days the *Sadhana of Mahamudra,* of twenty-four pages. Its purpose was to bring together the two great traditions of the Vajrayana, as well as to exorcise the materialism which seemed to pervade spiritual disciplines in the modern world. The message that I had received from my supplication was that one must try to expose spiritual materialism and all its trappings, otherwise true spirituality could not develop. I began to realize that I would have to take daring steps in my life.

Returning from Bhutan through India, I was delighted to meet again with His Holiness Karmapa and also His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I also made the acquaintance at this time of Mr. James George, the Canadian High Commissioner to India, and his wonderful family. Mr. George is a wise and benevolent man, an ideal statesman, who holds great respect and faith for the teachings of Buddhism.

I returned to Samye Ling, reflecting on the experience of Tagtsang. One positive message which awaited me was the approval of my application for British citizenship. This I felt very good about, as a confirmation of my appreciation for English culture and, on my side, as a gesture toward working with the occidental world and its own valid traditions. I was proud to become a British subject and resident of Scotland, and I was in fact the first Tibetan ever to become Her Majesty's British subject.

Nevertheless, there remained some hesitation as to how to throw myself completely into proclaiming the dharma to the Western world, uprooting spiritual materialism and developing further compassion and affection. I went through several months of ambivalence, of feeling pushed forward and pulled back simultaneously, unable to respond clearly in spite of a series of small warnings. Then driving one day in Northumberland, I blacked out at the wheel of my car, ran off the road, and smashed through the front of a joke shop. I was brought to Newcastle General Hospital. In spite of the pain, my mind was very clear; there was a strong sense of communication—finally the real message had got

through—and I felt a sense of relief and even humor. Twenty-four hours later, awakening suddenly, I found that my left side was paralyzed.

When plunging completely and genuinely into the teachings, one is not allowed to bring along one's deceptions. I realized that I could no longer attempt to preserve any privacy for myself, any special identity or legitimacy. I should not hide behind the robes of a monk, creating an impression of inscrutability which, for me, turned out to be only an obstacle. With a sense of further involving myself with the sangha, I determined to give up my monastic vows. More than ever I felt myself given over to serving the cause of Buddhism.

I decided at this time to marry a young lady of the Pybus family, a very devoted Buddhist who inspired me in my work. She, with her problems of departing from her culture to become a full-fledged Buddhist practitioner, and I, also desiring to transcend cultural boundaries, both felt it a good idea to be married and provide a united front in devoting ourselves to the cause of buddhadharma. Her name was Diana Judith, innocent and cheerful. We were married at the registrar's office in Edinburgh, to the consternation of her mother and other family members. Her father had died a few years earlier, but apparently he had been an open-minded man who was intrigued with Buddhism and had given Diana a few hints about the existence of Buddhist wisdom before his death. (Recently Mrs. Pybus, Diana's mother, moved to the United States and, meeting her for the first time, apart from a brief encounter before the marriage, I found that she is a magnificent woman of tremendous energy and insight. We now enjoy a close relationship, and her dignity and breadth of vision have enhanced my world.) After our marriage, Diana took my family name of Mukpo, which is the name of one of the six major tribes of Tibet. My family is descended from the famous Lord Mukpo, Gesar of Ling.

The marriage stirred up a great deal of conflict among students at Samye Ling, who were unable to understand the significance of it. The conflict became intense. One individual, by the name of Christopher Woodman, showed particular delight at this conflict. Mr. Woodman was so inspired by the prospect of jealous warfare against myself and Diana that he attempted to convince the London Buddhist Society and other Buddhist organizations in Britain that my sense of dedication should be regarded as that of a neurotic criminal.

Matters having reached such a point, I invoked again and again the

inspiration of Dorje Trolö Karma Pakshi. I even consulted the *I Ching,* which indicated that one should cross the great water. I did not want to waste further time in waging war, but rather felt determined to proceed in my work of propagating the dharma. In view of this, and the meager potential for genuine Buddhism in Britain at this time, I decided to journey to the American continent.

America was fresh and unknown territory for me, although there were some people there to whom I was known. *Born in Tibet* had been published in the United States in 1968. In 1969 *Meditation in Action,* drawn from a series of talks at Samye Ling, was published by the English firm of Stuart and Watkins. A young American bookseller by the name of Samuel Bercholz saw it during a visit with the publisher and was immediately inspired to bring it out in America. *Meditation in Action* appeared in the United States as the first book published by Shambhala Publications, in the autumn of 1969, just a few months before my arrival. The response to it was very positive. One indication of this was an invitation from a group at the University of Colorado to come to Boulder and teach. Also, a number of American students who had been at Samye Ling had left for the United States before me as a vanguard to prepare for my arrival. They had purchased a 434-acre farm in northern Vermont, to which they gave the name Tail of the Tiger.

With the invitation from Boulder and the news of the establishment of Tail of the Tiger, added to the growing inhospitableness of our situation in Scotland, Diana and I departed for America. My physical disability and her youth made the journey, and what lay ahead of us, all the more exciting. On the airplane from Glasgow to Toronto, we talked of conquering the American continent, and we were filled with a kind of constant humor. As we did not yet have a visa to enter the United States, we proceeded to Montreal, where we spent the next six weeks living in a small apartment. Students from Tail of the Tiger came up to visit, and I also responded to several requests to teach in Montreal. In May of 1970, we obtained our visa and entered the United States.

At Tail of the Tiger we found an undisciplined atmosphere combining the flavors of New York City and hippies. Here too people still seemed to miss the point of dharma, though not in the same way as in Britain, but in American free-thinking style. Everyone was eager to jump into tantric practices at once. Traveling to California on a teaching tour set up by Tail of the Tiger and Mr. Bercholz, I encountered many more



Vidyadhara the Venerable Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, February 1977.
PHOTO: ANDREA CRAIG.

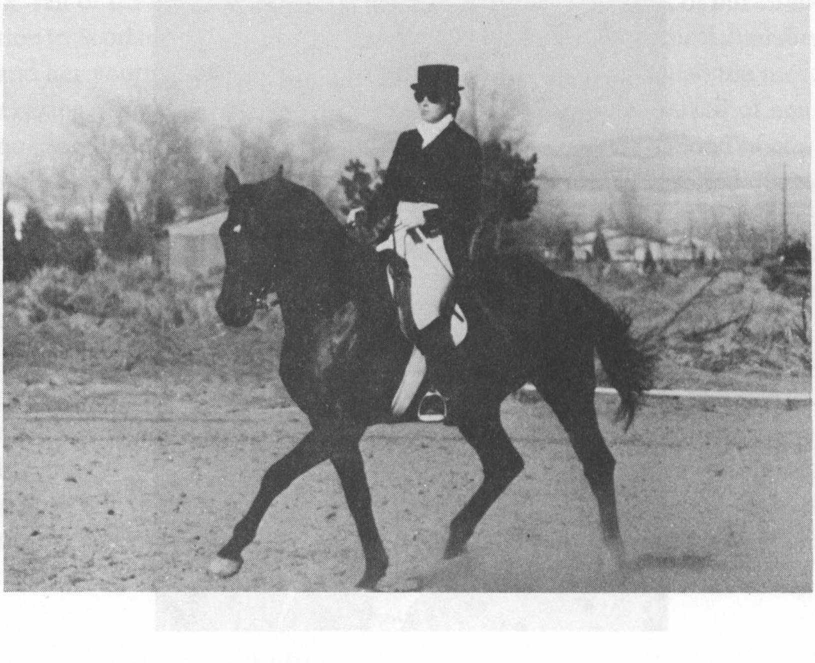
Vajra Regent Ösel Tendzin. PHOTO: BLAIR HANSEN.





Left to right: *Trungpa Rinpoche, His Holiness the sixteenth Gyalwa Karmapa, and Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung.* PHOTO: JAMES GRITZ.

Diana Mukpo riding dressage.



free-style people indulging themselves in confused spiritual pursuits. The saving grace of this visit was the warm hospitality offered me by Mr. Bercholz and his colleagues in Shambhala Publications, which was located in Berkeley. At the same time, I realized that the energy behind people's fascinations was beginning to lighten and that America held genuine possibilities for receiving the dharma. Meeting the students of other teachers was especially disappointing. These students seemed to lack any understanding of discipline, and purely to appreciate teachers who went along with their own neurosis. No one seemed to be presenting a way of cutting through the students' neurosis. One outstanding exception to this situation was Shunryu Suzuki Roshi and his students, whose presence felt like a breath of fresh air. I would have more contact with them later.

I returned to Tail of the Tiger where I presented my first long seminar in this country, consisting of seventeen talks on Gampopa's text *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation.* This was followed by a similar seminar on the life and teachings of Milarepa. During this period Diana returned to England to try and fetch my eight-year-old Tibetan son, Ösel Rangdrö, who had remained behind in the care of Christopher Woodman. To our surprise, Mr. Woodman refused to let him go, deciding to hold him as a captive. A court case followed which resulted in Ösel being temporarily sent to live at the Pestalozzi Children's Village in Sussex. Here I visited him for ten days in the autumn of 1970. It was not until the following year that we were able to bring Ösel to live with us in America.

From England, I flew directly to Denver, Colorado, where I was received by the University of Colorado group. They provided initial hospitality, putting me up in a cabin in Gold Hill, an old mining town in the mountains above Boulder. After a few weeks, I moved to a larger house in Four Mile Canyon near Boulder, where Diana joined me. Both of us took a strong liking to the city of Boulder, its fresh air, its manageable size, and of course its mountains. I began to teach and a community of students began to gather, renting a house on Alpine Street to which I gave the name Anitya Bhavan, "House of Impermanence." Gradually the feeling of the students was changing and I saw definite potential for transforming them from homegrown dilettantes into genuine disciplined people.

As the enthusiasm for meditation practice and study grew, so did our membership. A group of students of Swami Satchidananda's Integral

Yoga Institute first hosted us, then joined us, and we took over their practice facilities on Pearl Street in downtown Boulder. One California disciple of Swami Satchidananda, a young American of Italian background, came to me with an invitation to attend a World Enlightenment Festival. He was known as Narayana, a colorful personality with lots of smiles, possessing the charm of American Hindu diplomacy. From the first, I felt some definite sense of connection with him.

In March of 1971 Diana gave birth to a son. Witnessing the birth, I was filled with a sense of delight and of the child's sacredness. His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave him the name of Tendzin Lhawang, and I added Taktruk, meaning "tiger's cub." Later he was recognized by His Holiness Karmapa as the rebirth of one of his teachers, Surmang Tendzin Rinpoche.

The energy and openness of the students now began to unfold quite rapidly, and we formally established a meditation center in Boulder under the name of Karma Dzong, "Fortress of Action." In addition, after a certain amount of searching, we purchased 360 acres of land west of Fort Collins, Colorado, which we called the Rocky Mountain Dharma Center. The first students who moved on to this land were a group of young and quite innocent hippies who called themselves "The Pygmies."

During this period I traveled a great deal. On my second visit to California, I was able to spend more time with Suzuki Roshi, and this proved to be an extraordinary and very special experience. Suzuki Roshi was a Zen master in the Soto Zen tradition who had come to America in 1958 and founded the Zen Center, San Francisco, and Zen Mountain Center at Tassajara Springs. He was a man of genuine Buddhism, delightful and profound, full of flashes of Zen wit. In the example of his spiritual power and integrity, I found great encouragement that genuine Buddhism could be established in America. His students were disciplined and dedicated to the practice of meditation, and on the whole presented themselves as precise and tidy. Mrs. Suzuki also I found to be a wonderful woman who was very generous to both myself and Diana.

When Suzuki Roshi died in December of 1971, I was left with a feeling of great lonesomeness. Yet his death had the effect on me of arousing further strength; his genuine effort to plant the dharma in America must not be allowed to die. I did, however, feel especially keenly the loss of the possibility of exploring further the link between Tibetan and Japa-

nese culture. Since coming to the West, I have become increasingly fascinated with aesthetics and the psychology of beauty. Through Suzuki Roshi's spiritual strength and his accomplishments in the arts of the Zen tradition, I felt I could have learned much more in these areas.

During this period my presentation of the dharma to students was based on the practice of pure sitting meditation, the traditional shamatha-vipashyana technique presented by the Buddha. Students maintained a daily sitting practice, as well as taking intensive solitary and group meditation retreats. The other major element in my teaching was continual warnings against dilettantism, spiritual shopping, and the dangers of spiritual materialism. The enthusiasm and trust of students all over America continued to accelerate, with the result that local centers for study and practice sprang up in different parts of the United States and Canada. To all of these centers we gave the name Dharmadhatu, meaning "Space of Dharma." Now, inspired by the strength of my encounter with Suzuki Roshi and by the genuine friendship of my own students, I decided to establish Vajradhatu, a national organization with offices in Boulder to oversee and unify the present and future Dharmadhatus. Narayana became an early member of Vajradhatu's board of directors.

Alongside the traditional teachings and practice of Buddhism, one of my principal intents was to develop a Buddhist culture, one which would transcend the cultural characteristics of particular nationalities. An early step in this direction was the establishment of the Mudra theater group. It developed out of a notorious theater conference which we hosted in Boulder early in 1973 bringing together our students and members of various experimental theater groups from around the country such as the Open Theater, the Byrd-Hoffmann, and the Provisional Theater. Amid the variety of demonstrations and exchanges taking place among the participants, my personal style and uncompromisingness had both positive and negative effects; in any case, all of the participants became highly energized. Following this conference, I presented to our own Mudra theater group the notion of training body, speech, and mind rather than immediately embarking on conventional performances. I introduced a series of exercises based on Tibetan monastic dance and the oriental martial arts which focused on the principles of center and space and their mutual intensification and diffusion. Members of the Mudra group have maintained a regular practice over the years and are now at

the point of presenting performances to the public, which they have begun with two short plays of my own composition.

The Mudra approach to theater has a parallel in the Maitri project, which also got under way at this time. The idea for it arose from a discussion that Suzuki Roshi and I had had concerning the need for a therapeutic facility for disturbed individuals interested in meditation. The Maitri approach to therapy involves working the different styles of neurosis through the tantric principles of the five buddha families. Rather than being subjected to any form of analysis, individuals are encouraged to encounter their own energies through a meditation practice employing various postures in rooms of corresponding shapes and colors. A major facility for these practices, the Maitri Center, is located on a secluded, ninety-acre farm outside of New York City.

In May of 1973 my third son, Gesar Arthur, was born. We named him after the two great warrior kings, of ancient Tibet and England. Later he was recognized by Khyentse Rinpoche and His Holiness Karmapa as the rebirth of my own root guru, Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen.

As students became more completely involved with practice and study, I felt there was a need for more advanced training in the tradition of Jamgön Kongtrül the Great and of the Kagyü contemplative order. A situation was needed in which a systematic and thorough presentation of the dharma could be made. Accordingly, I initiated the annual Vajradhatu Seminary, a three-month intensive practice and study retreat for mature students. The first of these seminaries, involving eighty students, took place at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in the autumn of 1973. Periods of all-day sitting meditation alternated with a study program methodically progressing through the three yanas of Buddhist teaching, hinayana, mahayana, and vajrayana.

This progress through the three yanas was also manifested in the development of the community itself. Through the strict discipline of sitting practice, students were encouraged to develop warmth and a greater compassion toward themselves. Beyond this, it was necessary for them to have compassion toward their world and to share what they had learned with others. Working for the benefit of others is at the heart of the Buddhist approach, particularly that of the mahayana. I began to appoint some of the older students as meditation instructors to work with newer ones. These individuals are instructors in a very strict sense;

their role is not to theorize or analyze but just to transmit what they themselves have learned and understood.

Going further in our effort to expand communication with others, we evolved the plan of establishing the Naropa Institute. The purpose of this institute is, first of all, to provide a vessel for the development of bodhisattva activity among both teachers and students. It emphasizes the discipline of learning and the appreciation of our heritages of both the Orient and the Occident, grounded in meditation practice and commitment to personal development. The first session of the institute in the summer of 1974 attracted over two thousand students. Among other prominent teachers who participated, perhaps the most colorful was Ram Dass; the interplay between the two of us during the course of the summer was delightfully humorous. After a second highly successful summer in 1975, Naropa Institute adopted a year-round degree-granting program.

By this time my relationship with my students had become entirely natural, and the flow of communication between us was effortless. There was a need, however, for them to witness other teachers of our lineage. In the autumn of 1974, with perfect timing, His Holiness Karmapa made his first visit to the West. Arriving in New York, he traveled across the country visiting each of our main centers. While at Tail of the Tiger, at my request he gave it the new Tibetan name of Karmê Chöling, "Dharma Place of the Karma Kagyüs." In spite of a certain amount of uncertainty and clumsiness on the part of the students, His Holiness was extremely pleased with them and with what I had accomplished. Many people had the great fortune of participating in the Vajra Crown ceremony as well as several abhisekas which His Holiness performed. The visit served as a landmark to confirm that the dharma had actually taken root in the soil of America. His Holiness issued a proclamation confirming the existence of Buddhism in America and the fulfilment of my role as a Vajra Master, further empowering me as Vajracharya, a spiritual master of the highest level.

Following the first Vajradhatu Seminary I had transmitted to a small group of close students the preliminary practices of the vajrayana. With the introduction of these practices, along with the enormous inspiration to devotion aroused by the visit of His Holiness, the true vajrayana style of surrender combined with complete discipline began to show through in our sangha. One example of this was that the contingent of voluntary

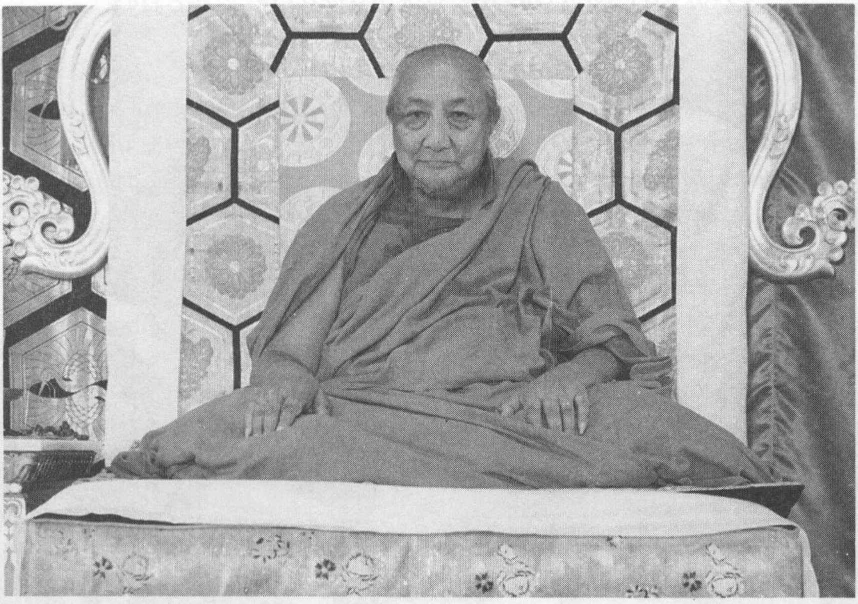
bodyguards who had served His Holiness requested after his departure to remain active on a permanent basis, to assist me personally and to prevent any interruptions to our work.

By now Vajradhatu had become one of the foremost Buddhist institutions in America. Its growth had been natural and unforced, but in order to accommodate such large-scale work, it became clearly necessary to employ a number of the students as a permanent staff. In the beginning most of these administrators were complete amateurs. Coming to their work purely as practitioners of meditation, they learned from their experience, step by step, and developed increasing administrative capabilities, combining efficiency with a wakeful sense of humor. Narayana has been an outstanding example of this process. Another is my private secretary, David Rome, who has been a reliable companion and confidant to me for the last four years and has helped a lot in inspiring my work.

During all of this time my wife Diana has been a considerable source of encouragement to me, as she has involved herself with dharma practice and the care of our children. Also, she has revived an interest from her own childhood in horses, which has led to her becoming a student of the classical school of equitation known as dressage, exemplified by the Spanish Riding School of Vienna. She has made extremely rapid progress in working up to the level of Grand Prix, and the two of us share a keen interest in the art of horsemanship.

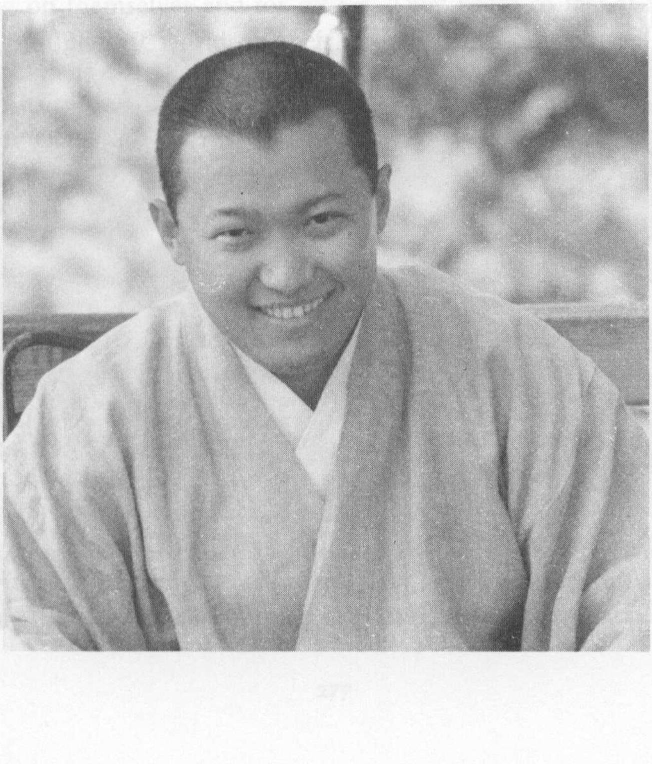
All in all, my sense at each point on the way has been one of trying very hard at first, then relaxing and thinking to the future. By now, I feel, the major obstacles have been overcome and there is a sense of having achieved what was envisaged. No doubt there is much more work and many adventures still awaiting me, and for these I feel prepared. Whatever I have done has been guided by the blessings of Jamgön Kongtrül, and his presence is closer now than ever before. There is a constant sense of gratitude to my tutors and of appreciation for the Tibetan wisdom which was imparted to me, everything from how to pitch a tent to the attainment of enlightenment. I feel young and old at the same time.

In order to impart this wealth to so many people, and to ensure that everything will not stop at my death, it is necessary to have one person as an inheritor, someone whom I can train and observe over a period of many years. For a long time it was in my mind to appoint Narayana to this role, and in the summer of 1976 I did so, empowering him as Dorje Gyaltsap, Vajra Regent. Assuming the refuge name which I had given



Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. PHOTO: BLAIR HANSEN.

Ösel Mukpo, the Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche.
PHOTO: WILLIAM KARELLIS.





Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche and the Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche. PHOTO: LEE WEINGRAD.

Karmê Chöling in Barnet, Vermont. PHOTO: JANE COHEN.



him several years before of Ösel Tendzin, "Radiant Holder of the Teachings," he took on his heavy responsibility, feeling burdened by it but tremendously inspired. Six hundred people attended the ceremony of his empowerment. There was a wide range of reactions; mostly, people were deeply moved that a future holder of the lineage could be an American.

Ösel Tendzin himself is arrogant and humble, resourceful and impatient, and always willing to regard his position as a further training process. Working with him takes no struggle, and he is quick to apply what he has learned. My training of him is primarily through close and critical observation. My approach to administration and the community in general has been to give more and more responsibility to people but to hold the nerve center in my control, and I am teaching Ösel Tendzin to do likewise.

For their part, community members are taking on more and more duties, contributing their full- or part-time energy. A large number of authorized meditation instructors throughout the country work personally with newer students. In a few cases early leaders in the administration have fallen out through ambition and lack of vision, but they have remained as faithful practitioners. On the whole I find that all of the members of the community are becoming mature people committed to working on themselves and for others. They begin to feel at home in their new Buddhist world. In their manner of respecting and helping each other there is no need for big brothers, yet they have a genuine affection for leadership and sense of constant forward vision. They begin to present themselves with confidence and even elegance, although there could still be problems of exclusivity and self-satisfaction.

Throughout this time I have been conducting numerous seminars and public talks, making regular visits to the east and west coasts, and each year there have been more people in attendance. The size of our centers, as well as of the Vajradhatu Seminary, has grown accordingly. In the autumn of 1976 we completed a major construction project at Karmê Chöling, including a large shrine hall, halls for vajrayana practice, classrooms, dining hall, library, staff quarters, and dormitories for visitors. In Boulder we purchased a large older building to accommodate the expanded office needs of Karma Dzong and Vajradhatu. Community members did extensive renovation work on the building, to which we gave the name Dorje Dzong, and the top floor was converted into a handsome shrine hall capable of accommodating six hundred people. Other

projects are in the planning, including a major group retreat facility at the Rocky Mountain Dharma Center.

We have also had more wonderful visits from teachers of the lineage. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche made an extensive visit in 1976 which was personally very moving for me. The response of our students and the progress in their practice have certainly contributed to prolonging his life, and he has promised to visit us again. His Holiness Dudjom Rinpoche, head of the Nyingma order, also paid us a visit, and his teachings have greatly benefited many of our students.

As I conclude my writing of this chapter, His Holiness Karmapa is with us again on his second visit, accompanied by the twenty-two-year-old Jamgön Kongtrül of Palpung, whose previous incarnation ordained me when I was eight years old. This time the hospitality and genuineness of His Holiness' reception have been spotless, reflecting the maturity of the students, their lack of resistance, and their fearless devotion. Consequently His Holiness is enjoying himself thoroughly, as if coming to America were returning home rather than traveling to a foreign country. He has given his confirmation and blessing to Ösel Tendzin as Vajra Regent as well as to my son Gesar as the rebirth of Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen. He has also requested me to act as one of the principal organizers of an international affiliation of Karma Kagyü institutions.

At this point, for the purpose of reviewing what has been achieved and what needs to be done further, as well as to devote time to practice, I have decided to set aside the year of 1977 for a personal retreat. During this year all of my students, headed by Ösel Tendzin, will have the opportunity to continue on their own. I have no doubt that they will be able to carry out the vision of the golden sun of dharma, energetically extending themselves for the benefit of beings and arousing the authentic dawn of Vajrasattva.

Editor's note: Small revisions were made to the 1977 epilogue following the author's death, according to instructions given in 1985. It is the revised epilogue that appears here.

Epilogue to the 1971 Edition

It is eleven years since we arrived in India and I've since traveled twice as far again to Colorado, U.S.A., where I am writing this from my home. Upon being asked to do an epilogue for this new edition of *Born in Tibet,* I began to think about the nature of these last years. Their most outstanding quality has been the strength of the teachings, which have been a constant source of inspiration during this time in India, Britain, and America.

Adapting to these new ways of life after the colorful and simple quality of Tibet, where people were so in touch with their natural environment, has been truly a great adventure. It has been made possible by the continually active presence of Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen and Khenpo Gangshar, my teachers. They taught about a basic sanity that has nothing to do with time and place. They taught about the neurotic aspects of the mind and the confusion in political, social, and other structures of life, which are universal. I have seen many fellow Tibetans as well as Westerners drawn into these problems.

Jamgön Kongtrül had incredibly precise insight when he dealt with people's minds, not only in the technical aspect of teaching meditation and philosophy, but also in the whole feel of his communication in which he acted as a host or mirror. He had that kind of patience which permits other people to grow. His inspiring way of teaching allowed his disciples vast amounts of space and encouraged confidence in their own energy. His skillful means were the embodiment of all those qualities of being truly awake; a miracle. The great wisdom of the lineage was mani-

fested in him. For me the inspiration that he gave is so complete and unique that I have no further desire to hunt for another guru.

He always used an event or situation as part of the understanding of the universality of a guru. When my relationship to him became too ego-gratifying, he would leave and have Khenpo Gangshar work with me. This would shock me through the hesitations and clinging to the guru as the only savior. This situation forced me to rely on independent intelligence. For example, Kongtrül would not help me work out the very complicated administration of my monastery.

I felt that in some ways this spiritual journey was made with Khenpo Gangshar (whose name means "whatever rises is self-liberated") while we worked together on the philosophical texts of the abhidharma, madhyamaka, prajnaparamita, and many others. There had to be a transition from learning to practice. This was particularly reinforced by seeing the human aspect of the abstract political and religious tensions and by learning about compassion and communication. For instance, the teachings had to be presented in simple and direct language to laypeople. I had to throw hesitation overboard and go directly with the dance of life. Khenpo Gangshar taught that the teachings of yogis like Tilopa and Naropa still applied to twentieth-century man. Again a situation similar to that with Jamgön Kongtrül developed. This occurred when I had to decide whether or not to leave Tibet. So there was a continuing state of aloneness and the simplicity inherent in it.

Living in India and then in the West has been a process of progressively leaving behind those physical things connected with home. In India I still had the security of some familiar things and the warmth of friends. While receiving an introduction to new situations, my life continued the karmic pattern of teaching and learning.

The inspiration of Kongtrül Rinpoche's teaching on communication and a succession of coincidences, including a Spalding scholarship, brought me to England and into contact with the people and the rich details of life at Oxford. It seemed to be a survey of new ground. It was also the first time I had been the object of that fascination which is noncommunicative and nonrelating, of being seen as an example of a species rather than as an individual: "Let's go see the lamas at Oxford."

Born in Tibet was the first attempt to get through the cultural barriers publicly. The book was received somewhat as a description or travel-

ogue, but the atmosphere of the teachings did not seem to be generally perceived.

One particularly beautiful thing to hear in England was Western Buddhists giving talks on the dharma. It was so refreshing to see that the teachings could be presented in the local language. I was reminded of the last words of Khenpo Gangshar who said that because of the universality of the teachings his attempt to teach Chinese officials through an interpreter were not entirely fruitless.

At the same time it was an uplifting experience to see such interest in the actual practice of meditation, even though the attitude was somewhat solemn and serious, blending perhaps with the natural climate of Britain. The invitation to teach at Johnstone House Contemplative Community in Scotland was very significant. The wildness of the endless rolling hills was somehow reminiscent of Khenpo Gangshar's freshness, although the involvement with trusteeships and organization had nothing whatever to do with the atmosphere of Jamgön Kongtrül and Khenpo Gangshar. I tended to feel apprehensive of the power structure, but the inspiration of communicating the practice of meditation continued with a feeling of their presence, as was also true of the talks I gave. We were offered the opportunity to take over Johnstone House and did so in April 1967 when we established the Samye Ling Meditation Centre for the purpose of providing a place to retreat, study buddhadharma, and practice meditation.

As the scene developed, the emphasis was on meditation in action. Samye Ling became the training ground for the living of daily life with the simplicity of meditation. But somehow the desire to expand, the romantic idea to make a successful and glorified empire seems to be natural and inevitable in the human mind. Materialism came to play a permanent part in the maintenance of the house. With great disappointment I watched the business inspiration and the center take a direction apart from my original aim.

My return to India in 1969 took the pattern somewhat of a political and social obligation. But apart from that, I had a memorable retreat at Taktsang in Bhutan, where it seemed that I was reunited with Guru Padmasambhava, who had meditated there before bringing Buddhism to Tibet. There I experienced again the powerful and wild yogi quality of Khenpo Gangshar.

Coming back to Britain, there was the question of whether to con-

tinue the experience of Taktsang. The hesitation was powerfully expressed in a car crash in May 1969 in which I was paralyzed on the left side. This led to my taking off the robe. The purpose of this was to gain for me personally the strength to continue teaching by unmasking, and also to do away with the "exotic" externals which were too fascinating to students in the West. These had a devastating effect, as the law of karma clearly manifested. You cannot keep up hypocrisy until the very attainment of enlightenment; sooner or later the covering shatters and you have to face direct and honest communication.

It was a question of relating in terms of the image as "monk" or of just ordinary man. The attempt to keep control of such powerful energy in this situation highlighted for me the necessity of a union of wisdom and skill, both for my own sake as teacher as well as for my pupils. Such exposure was overwhelming. It was a direct message, as Jamgön Kongtrül had taught, of seeing the guru in the current event of situations. The accident not only brought me more completely in touch with wisdom again but it also finally cut through the seduction of materialism. Keeping the image of monk in order to handle situations was an imbalance of skillful means.

When a guru makes a great change in his life, it is often an opening for great chaos among the pupils who regard him as an object of security. Very few are able to go along with the change. In this case it was as if removing the mask or destroying the image provoked uncontrolled passions and possessiveness among disciples and friends. Great ignorance and paranoia pervaded, in that each person ignored his own reaction and projected it onto the situation. Nevertheless, the creative energy continued with strong conviction and the direction was still clear.

During this time my marriage to my wife Diana took place in January 1970. This brought an even stronger reaction among the more possessive followers who regarded their guru as "lover." They began what may be called "hunting the guru." When this occurs the person is no longer open to teaching. The ego game is so strong that everything nourishes it and the person wants only to manipulate, so that in a sense he kills the guru with his own ignorance.

This situation reminded me of the time when Jamgön Kongtrül's disciples tried, with the best of intentions, to reinterpret with their scholarly research his, Jamgön Kongtrül's, own words in order to show him their real meaning. They attempted to help him out with tremendous violence

and feelings of superiority. This ignorance of one's real purpose can be called the basic twist of ego. Such a situation requires a gap or space in communication which allows passion to lose its intensity; then creative communication can continue.

At this time, in much the same pattern as in my coming to Britain from India, there was a succession of coincidences including invitations from spiritual friends to come to North America to teach. I decided to come for a time. I do not believe that there is a divine providence as such, but the situation of karma and the wildness of Khenpo Gangshar and Jamgön Kongtrül directed me to cross the Atlantic with my wife in the spring of 1970.

Because of visa difficulties, we had to stay in Canada for six weeks or so. As happens, this turned out to be a good opportunity to feel the ground and to soften our expectations of the United States. Requests for teaching presented themselves and I gave a number of seminars while waiting to go to Tail of the Tiger, the meditation community in Barnet, Vermont, started by some of my students from Samye Ling. The founding of this center was not premeditated but rather, following the teachings of the lineage, came about quite spontaneously in March 1970.

This center, where there were both my old students and many new people, was the first auspicious circumstance of my stay in North America. The reception there was symbolic of my future relationships and experiences in teaching in the United States. One feels an extraordinary neutral energy rather than the reputedly destructive energy. As I found on subsequent lecture tours, this seems to be generally true all over the country in spite of the pressures everyone experiences.

Responses to the seminars given in Vermont were very vital; serious interest was shown in the teachings and many people decided to go into long retreats, which seems to be the general pattern since then (California, New York, Boston, as well as here in Boulder, Colorado, where a second center is being started).

My plans at the time of writing this epilogue are quite open. There will be seminars here and in Vermont, lecture tours, and whatever else comes up as the karmic pattern continues to reveal itself.

APPENDIX I

The Administration of the Kagyü Monasteries of East Tibet

tridzin	The supreme abbot.
gyaltsap	The regent abbot.
khenpo	Master of studies, in charge of academic work. He conducts both the hinayana and the mahayana rites.
dorje loppön	Master of rites. He conducts the vajrayana rites. (Both the khenpo and the dorje loppön officiate at these rites in the absence of the supreme abbot).
drupön	Master of meditation, head of the retreat center.
gekö	Senior monk in charge of discipline. Head of the administrative body. He receives visitors to the monastery and keeps lists of the monks and novices.
kyorpön	Senior tutor under the khenpo.
chandzö	Senior secretary under the abbot.
umdze	The precentor, in charge of music and chanting and of the timetable of assemblies.
chöpön	In charge of the arrangement of the altars and shrines and of their proper upkeep, including the decoration of votive offerings.
champön	Master of dancing; trainer of the dancers in the "mystery plays" of which each monastic order has its own particular form.
nyerpa	Bursar, in charge of the personal finance, lodging, and food of the supreme abbot. He also manages his property.

tratsang	The collegiate council for the monastery, working directly under the gekö. In charge of all the finances of the monastery outside the supreme abbot's obligations and all the festival properties.
tra-nyerpa	A lay treasurer. All donations to the monastery which come under the charge of the gekö and the tratsang are received and administered by the tra-nyerpa.
junior tra-nyerpa	In charge of catering and domestic work; he can be either a monk or a layman.
geyö	Title given to a number of men with authority to keep order among the monks, who also attend to the general tidiness of the monastery.
chöyö	Assistant to the chöpön, who attends to the assembly halls, shrine rooms, altars, etc.
machen	Head of kitchen.
jadrenpas	Members of the domestic staff.
jamas	Cooks.
chumas	Water carriers.

Except for the supreme abbot, the regent abbot, and the senior secretary, all other members of the monastic administration hold office for three years but can be reelected.

All young monks on entering the monastery, from whatsoever background, must begin with the more menial tasks, rising later according to their abilities.

Monastic Finances

The organization of Tibetan monasteries was somewhat different from that practiced in other Buddhist countries.

The Tibetans have always lived for and in their religion and from the time that Buddhism was introduced their religious centers have been the pivot of the community. Large and small properties were continually being donated in order to establish monasteries; the produce of these lands became a source of monastic income while at the same time increasing the means of livelihood for the inhabitants of the district.

The tenure of monastic land, including domicile, cattle, horses, implements, seed, and incidental expenses, was granted to a peasant on a three-year lease, which might be renewed. In return he had to provide

the monastery with a contracted return in kind and labor; any profits above the contract he could keep for himself. When his lease was up he was obliged to return the same quota that he had taken over and in equally good condition. The leaseholder had to provide the monastery with such items as meat, silk and its products, grain, etc., and, by trading, to supply the monastery's requirements of tea. Certain properties were allocated to meeting the expenses of particular annual celebrations. There were other less wealthy tenants whose contribution to the monastery was to provide fuel, consisting of wood and dried dung; transport animals such as yaks, horses, and mules were allotted under similar conditions of return at the end of the contract period.

Every peasant owned his own small holding and was usually self-supporting. He was free to dispose of his land inside his own area but seldom did so. He was, however, expected to farm a given plot of the monastic estate every so many years.

The abbot or, in cases when more than a single monastery was involved, the supreme abbot was responsible for renovations and alterations of the monastery. The income for this came from the personal donations that he received. The senior secretary directed the disbursement for the major projects, but the abbot's more personal expenditure such as his clothes, table, traveling expenses, guests, and petty cash or, in the case of a minor, his educational expenses was all under the management of his bursar. When he received large gifts of brocade or cloth the abbot would hand over most of these to the monastery.

There was also the matter of farmland belonging personally to the abbot; the produce from this went to the monastery.

Thus monasteries and peasants were always interdependent and in cases of tenants falling into financial difficulties the abbot would give them assistance.

APPENDIX 2

The Doctrine of Tulkus

TO UNDERSTAND THE doctrine of tulkus in Tibet, it is necessary first of all to understand the Buddhist attitude to "rebirth." It is true that the Buddha spoke of an undergoing of countless existences by each one of us, and almost all Asian people envisage life in this sense: Naturally, one has always to distinguish between popularized versions of this doctrine and its proper understanding by those who do not confuse the issue through overvaluing their individual selves. In fact, the Buddha's message was not that these countless lives possess an intrinsic reality, but that there is for all of us the possibility of a release from their illusion. He saw that a stream of suffering pervades the lives of men and other beings and that their desire to perpetuate their own individuality is one of the strongest forces keeping them wedded to suffering. He taught that to abandon the sense of "I" leads to release from all those tendencies that bring about successive birth and death; as Tilopa, an Indian sage, put it: The spiritual quest is like a snake unwinding itself.

While we remain more or less enmeshed in a selfhood regarded as our own, past and future lives are continually being produced by those forces which still bind us to worldly existence. In the case of a tulku, however, the forces which produce his existence are of a different order. Something, or someone, that has no "individuality" or ego in the ordinary sense decides to work on earth for the sake of all beings. He (or "it") therefore takes birth over a certain period of time, in a series of human individuals, and it is these who are named "tulkus."

The influence in question may emanate from any of the archetypal

sources of wisdom, which is the stable essence of the universe, or else of compassion, which is wisdom in operation throughout countless world systems. So it may be said of a tulku that he is an emanation of Manjushri, the Bodhisattva of Wisdom, or of Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion; the Dalai Lama is known as an incarnation of the latter. In Tibet, a great sage such as Milarepa, known to have passed quite beyond the bondage of created things, is said to extend his influence over various lines of such incarnations. In the present book one finds lamas, such as Gyalwa Karmapa, Khyentse Rinpoche, and Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche who are recognized to be embodiments of particular spiritual influences. One such influence may in fact manifest itself through several individuals at once, as was the case with the five incarnations of the Jamgön Kongtrül.

These are high incarnates; but not all known tulkus are of this kind. In some instances a man of advanced spiritual development, but short of final liberation, dies before accomplishing a certain task and returns to complete it. Another kind of incarnation is known as a "tulku of benediction": When a certain well-beloved lama dies, his disciples will ask another lama who has been closely associated with the deceased (the latter, as often as not, will be the presiding lama of their school) to locate his spirit; as a result of this, the lama, though he does not return in person, confers his blessing upon the one who is to carry on his teaching; the person thus designated for the task will then reincarnate the departed master in the sense of perpetuating his spiritual influence.

Multiple incarnations, of which an example was given above, most frequently occur in fives, of which one in particular will embody the visible presence of the departed lama, another his powers of speech, and yet another his powers of thought; again, one will represent his activities and another his qualities.

Readers who are interested in this oft-misunderstood aspect of Tibetan spirituality may also consult with advantage the chapter on the Dalai Lama and his function in a book entitled *The Way and the Mountain* by Marco Pallis (who contributed the foreword to the present book) published by Peter Owen, London; that chapter contains much information on the subject of tulkuhood, both factual and technical. The same book also contains two other chapters treating compassion and gnosis from the point of view of the Tibetan tradition.

Meditation in Action

The Life and Example of Buddha

It is a clear, hot summer's day, and the thick branches of the sal trees are brilliant with flowers and heavy with their load of fruit. The landscape is wild and rocky with many caves, and the nearest town is more than a hundred miles away. In some of the caves are yogis with long matted hair, dressed only in a thin white cotton cloth. Some are sitting on deerskins and meditating. Others are performing various yogic practices, such as meditating while seated in the middle of a campfire, which is a well-known ascetic practice. Yet others are reciting mantras or devotional chants. The place has an atmosphere of peace, solitude, and stillness, but is also rather awesome. It might have remained unchanged since before the creation of the world. It is completely still and silent. There aren't even any birds singing. There is a great river nearby, but no fishermen. The river is so vast, it seems to be at least seven miles wide. On the bank ascetics are practicing the sacred ritual of purification. One sees them meditating and bathing in the river. That was the scene two thousand five hundred years ago in a certain place called Nairanjana in the province of Bihar in India.

A certain prince, called Siddhartha, arrives. His appearance is aristocratic; he has only recently removed his crown and his earrings and ornaments, so he feels rather naked. He has just sent away his horse and his last attendant, and now he puts on a clean white cotton cloth. He

looks around him and tries to imitate the other ascetics. He wants to follow their example, so he approaches one of them and asks for instruction in the practice of meditation. First he explains that he is a prince and has found life in the palace to be meaningless. He has seen that there is birth, death, sickness, and old age. He has also seen a sage walking along the street and this has inspired him. This is the example and the way of life he wants to follow. It is all new to him, and at first he cannot accept that this is actually happening. He cannot forget the luxuries and sensual enjoyments which he had in the palace and which are still revolving through his mind. This was Prince Siddhartha, the future Buddha.

He then received instruction, perhaps rather unwillingly, from his present guru. He was given the ascetic practice of a rishi and taught to sit cross-legged and employ the seven postures of yoga and to practice yogic breathing exercises. At first it was so new to him that it was almost like a game. He also enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment at having at last managed to leave his worldly possessions to follow this wonderful way of life. The memory of his wife and child and his parents was still very much in his mind, which must have disturbed his practice of yoga, but it seemed there was no way to control the mind. And the yogis never told him anything, except to follow the ascetic practice.

This was Buddha's experience, then, roughly two thousand five hundred years ago. And one would find even now a very similar landscape and have very similar experiences if one decided to leave home and renounce hot- and cold-water baths and forget about home cooking and the luxury of riding in motorcars, or public transport for that matter, which is still a great luxury. Some of us might go by airplane and take only a few hours to get there: Before you know where you are, you are in the middle of India. Some who are more adventurous may, perhaps, decide to hitchhike. Nevertheless it would still seem unreal, the journey would be continually exciting, and there would never be a dull moment. Finally we arrive in India. Perhaps in some ways it is disappointing. You will see a certain amount of modernization and the snobbishness of the high-class, better-educated Indians, who are still imitating the British raj. One might find it rather irritating at first, but somehow one accepts it and tries to leave the town as quickly as possible and head for the jungle. (In this case it may be a Tibetan monastery or an Indian ashram.) We could follow the same example and perhaps have more or less the same experience as Prince Siddhartha. The first thing that would be very much

on our minds would be the ascetic aspect of it, or rather the absence of luxury. Now, would we learn anything from these first few days and months? Perhaps we would learn something of the way of life. But perhaps, because we had never seen such a country, we would be more inclined to be excited. One tends to interpret everything, and an internal conversation goes on in the mind as one struggles to break down the barriers of communication and language. One is still living very much in one's own world. Just as it was for Buddha, so for us the excitement and the novelty of being in a strange country would not wear out for several months. One would write letters home as if *possessed* by the country, intoxicated with excitement and the strangeness of it all. So if one returned after only a few days or weeks, one would not have learned very much, one would merely have seen a different country, a different way of life. And the same thing would have happened to Buddha if he had left the jungle of Nairanjana and returned to his kingdom in Rajgir.

In the case of Buddha, he practiced meditation for a long time under Hindu teachers, and he discovered that asceticism and merely conforming to one religious setup did not particularly help. He still didn't get the answer. Well, perhaps he got some answers. In a sense these questions were already answered in his mind, but he was more or less seeing what he wanted to see, rather than seeing things as they were. So in order to follow the spiritual path one must first overcome the initial excitement; that is one of the first essentials. For unless one is able to overcome this excitement, one will not be able to learn, because any form of emotional excitement has a blinding effect. One fails to see life as it is because one tends so much to build up one's own version of it. Therefore one should never commit oneself or conform to any religious or political structure without first finding the real essence of what one is looking for. Labeling oneself, adopting an ascetic way of life, or changing one's costume—none of these brings about any real transformation.

After several years Buddha decided to leave. He had learned a great deal in a sense, but the time had come for him to say good-bye to his teachers, the Indian rishis, and to go off on his own. He went to a place quite a long way from there, although still on the bank of the Nairanjana River, and sat down under a pipal tree (which is also known as the bodhi tree). For several long years he remained there, seated on a large stone, eating and drinking very little. This was not because he felt it necessary to follow the practice of strict asceticism, but he did feel it was necessary

to remain alone and find things out for himself, rather than to follow someone else's example. He might have reached the same conclusions by different methods, but that is not the point. The point is that whatever one is trying to learn, it is necessary to have firsthand experience, rather than learning from books or from teachers or by merely conforming to an already established pattern. That is what he found, and in that sense Buddha was a great revolutionary in his way of thinking. He even denied the existence of Brahma, or God, the creator of the world. He determined to accept nothing which he had not first discovered for himself. This does not mean to say that he disregarded the great and ancient tradition of India. He respected it very much. His was not an anarchist attitude in any negative sense, nor was it revolutionary in the way the Communists are. His was real, positive revolution. He developed the creative side of revolution, which is not trying to get help from anyone else, but finding out for oneself. Buddhism is perhaps the only religion which is not based on the revelation of God nor on faith and devotion to God or gods of any kind. This does not mean that Buddha was an atheist or a heretic. He never argued theological or philosophical doctrines at all. He went straight to the heart of the matter, namely how to see the truth. He never wasted time in vain speculation.

By developing such a revolutionary attitude one learns a great deal. For example, suppose one misses lunch one day. One may not be hungry, one may have had a large breakfast, but the *idea* of missing lunch affects one. Certain patterns are formed within the framework of society and one tends to accept them without questioning. Are we really hungry, or do we just want to fill up that particular midday time? That is a very simple and straightforward example. But much the same applies when we come to the question of ego.

Buddha discovered that there is no such thing as "I," ego. Perhaps one should say there is no such thing as "am," "I am." He discovered that all these concepts, ideas, hopes, fears, emotions, conclusions, are created out of one's speculative thoughts and one's psychological inheritance from parents and upbringing and so on. We just tend to put them all together, which is of course partly due to lack of skill in our educational system. We are told what to think, rather than to do real research from within ourselves. So in that sense asceticism, meaning the experience of bodily pain, is by no means an essential part of Buddhism. What is important is to get beyond the pattern of mental concepts which we

have formed. That does not mean that we have to create a new pattern or try to be particularly unconventional and always go without lunch or what have you. We do not have to turn everything upside down in our pattern of behavior and in the way we present ourselves to other people. That again would not particularly solve the problem. The only way to solve the problem is by examining it thoroughly. From this point of view we have a certain desire—or not even as strong as desire—more a feeling of wanting to conform to something. And one does not even think about it, one is just led to it. So it is necessary to introduce the idea of *mindfulness*. Then we can examine ourselves each time and go beyond mere opinions and so-called common-sense conclusions. One must learn to be a skillful scientist and not accept anything at all. Everything must be seen through one's own microscope and one has to reach one's own conclusions in one's own way. Until we do that, there is no savior, no guru, no blessings, and no guidance that could be of any help.

Of course, there is always this dilemma: If there is no help, then what are we? Are we nothing? Are we not trying to reach something higher? What is this higher thing? What, for example, is buddhahood? What is enlightenment? Are they just nothing, or are they something? Well, I am afraid I am really no authority to answer this. I am merely one of the travelers, like everyone else here. But from my own experience—and my knowledge is, as the scripture describes it, "like a single grain of sand in the Ganges"—I would say that when we talk of "higher" things, we tend to think in terms of our own point of view, a bigger version of ourselves. When we speak of God, we tend to think in terms of our own image, only greater, colossal, a kind of expansion of ourselves. It is like looking at ourselves in a magnifying mirror. We still think in terms of duality. I am here, He is there. And the only way to communicate is by trying to ask His help. We may feel we are making contact at certain times, but somehow we can never really communicate in this way. We can never achieve union with God, because there is a fixed concept, a prefabricated conclusion, which we have already accepted, and we are merely trying to put that great thing into a small container. One cannot drive a camel through the eye of a needle. So we have to find some other means. And the only way to find it is to come back to the sheer simplicity of examining ourselves. This is not a question of trying to be "religious" or of making sure that one is kind to one's neighbor, or of giving as much money as possible to charity. Though of course these things

may also be very good. The main point is that we should not merely accept everything blindly and try to fit it into the right pigeonhole, but try to see it at first hand from our own experience.

This brings us to the practice of meditation, which is very important. The trouble here is that one usually finds that books, teachings, lectures, and so on are more concerned with proving that they are right than with showing *how* it is to be done, which is the essential thing. We are not particularly interested in spreading the teachings, but we are interested in making use of them and putting them into effect. The world is moving so fast, there is no time to *prove,* but whatever we learn, we must bring it and cook it and eat it immediately. So the whole point is that we must see with our own eyes and not accept any laid-down tradition as if it had some magical power in it. There is nothing magical which can transform us just like that. Although, being mechanically minded, we always look for something which will work by merely pressing a button. There is a great attraction in the shortcut, and if there is some profound method which offers a quick way, we would rather follow that than undertake arduous journeys and difficult practices. So here we see the true importance of asceticism: Punishing oneself leads nowhere, but some manual work and physical effort is necessary. If we go somewhere on foot, we know the way perfectly, whereas if we go by motorcar or airplane, we are hardly there at all, it becomes merely a dream. Similarly, in order to see the continual pattern of development, we have to go through it manually. That is one of the most important things of all. And here discipline becomes necessary. We have to discipline ourselves. Whether in the practice of meditation or in everyday life, there is a tendency to be impatient. On beginning something one tends to just taste it and then leave it; one never has the time to eat it and digest it properly and see the aftereffect of it. Of course, one has to taste for oneself and find out if the thing is genuine or helpful, but before discarding it one has to go a little bit further, so that at least one gets firsthand experience of the preliminary stage. This is absolutely necessary.

That is also what Buddha found. And that is why he sat and meditated on the bank of the Nairanjana for several years, hardly moving from the spot. He meditated in his own way, and he found that returning to the world was the only answer. When he discovered the awakened state of mind, he realized that leading an ascetic life and punishing oneself did not help, so he got up and went to beg for some food. The

first person he met, near Bodhgaya, was a wealthy woman who owned many cows. She gave him some boiled condensed milk with honey in it, and he drank it and found it delicious. Not only that, but he found it greatly enhanced his health and energy, as a result of which he was able to make great progress in the practice of meditation. The same thing happened in the case of the great Tibetan yogi Milarepa. The first time he went out and received a properly cooked meal, he found that it gave him new strength and he was able to meditate properly.

Buddha then looked around for somewhere comfortable to sit, having decided that sitting on a stone seat was too hard and painful. A farmer gave him a bunch of kusa grass, and Buddha spread it under a tree at Bodhgaya and sat down there. He had discovered that trying to achieve something by force was not the answer, and in fact for the first time he accepted that there was nothing to achieve. He completely abandoned all ambition. He had his drink and he had his seat, and he made himself as comfortable as possible. That very night he finally attained sambodhi, the fully awakened state. But that wasn't quite enough, he hadn't quite overcome everything. All his hidden fears and temptations and desires, the last lash of ego, came to him in the form of Mara, the Evil One. First Mara sent his beautiful daughters to seduce him, but without success. Then came the fierce troops of Mara, the last tactic of the ego. But Buddha had already achieved the state of maitri, loving-kindness. In other words he was not just compassionate in the sense of looking down on Mara as stupid—for Mara was his own projection—but he had achieved the nonresisting state, the state of nonviolence, where he identified himself with Mara. In the scriptures it says that each arrow of Mara became a rain of flowers falling down on him. So finally the ego surrendered and he achieved the awakened state of mind. We ourselves might have such an experience, perhaps in a short glimpse of clarity and peace—the open state of mind—but that is not quite enough. We have to learn how to put that into effect, we have to use that as a kind of center from which we can expand. One has to create the situation around one, so that one does not have to say, "I am the awakened person." If one had to say such a thing and demonstrate it verbally, one would not be awakened.

Buddha then walked for about seven weeks. In a sense he was just alone, and one might say he was a very lonely person, as he was the only one who saw and who had achieved something. He knew some of

the answers for dealing with life and for finding the true meaning, or suchness, in the world of samsara. But he was not quite sure how to present this and he almost decided not to speak. There is a gatha, or short verse, in one of the sutras where he says, "Profound peace without limit, such is the teaching I have found. But no one would be able to understand this, therefore I shall remain silent in the jungle." But then the true and final establishment of compassion came and he saw his ability to create the right situation. Up to this point he still had the desire to teach (because he had achieved something he felt that he should save the world—if one may use such an expression). But he had to give up this idea of saving all sentient beings. Then at the very moment when he had decided to leave the world and return to the jungle, the real, selfless compassion arose in him. He was no longer aware of himself as a teacher, he no longer had the idea that he had to save people, but whenever the situation presented itself he dealt with it spontaneously.

He preached and taught for about forty years, and spent his life walking from one end of India to the other. He did not ride on an elephant or a horse or a chariot, but simply walked barefoot all over India. I think if any of us had seen him or heard him talk, it would not have been anything like a lecture as we know it. It was just simple conversation. It was not the talking that was important but the whole situation that he created; it was not because he had achieved such spiritual power and thereby dominated the whole scene, but because he was simply being true—just as any of us could be. Therefore the teaching had been taught before he opened his mouth. That is why we find in the sutras that gods and asuras and all kinds of people from different parts of India attended his talks and saw him and met him, and all could understand him. They did not have to ask him questions, but they automatically received the answers. This is a wonderful example of communication. Buddha never claimed that he was an incarnation of God, or any kind of divine being. He was just a simple human being who had gone through certain things and had achieved the awakened state of mind. It is possible, partially possible at least, for any of us to have such an experience.

From this example we see that speech alone is not the only method of communication. There is already communication before we say anything, even if we are only saying "Hello" or "How are you?" Somehow communication also continues after we finish speaking. The whole thing must be conducted in a very skillful way, by being true and not self-

centered. Then the concept of duality is absent and the right pattern of communication is established. It is only through one's own experience of searching that this can be achieved, and not through merely copying someone else's example. Neither asceticism nor any preconceived pattern will provide the answer. We have to make the first move ourselves rather than expecting it to come from the phenomenal world or from other people. If we are meditating at home and we happen to live in the middle of the High Street, we cannot stop the traffic just because we want peace and quiet. But we can stop ourselves, we can accept the noise. The noise also contains silence. We must put ourselves into it and expect nothing from outside, just as Buddha did. And we must accept whatever situation arises. As long as we never retreat from the situation, it will always present itself as a vehicle and we will be able to make use of it. As it is said in the scriptures, "The dharma is good at the beginning, the dharma is good in the middle, and the dharma is good at the end." In other words the dharma never becomes out-of-date, since fundamentally the situation is always the same.

The Manure of Experience and the Field of Bodhi

HOW TO GIVE BIRTH to bodhi, the awakened state of mind? There is always great uncertainty when you don't know how to begin and you seem to be perpetually caught up in the stream of life. A constant pressure of thoughts, of wandering thoughts and confusion and all kinds of desires, continually arises. If you speak in terms of the man in the street, he doesn't seem to have a chance, because he is never really able to look inward; unless perhaps he reads some book on the subject and has the desire to enter into a disciplined way of life, and even then there seems to be no chance, no way to begin. People tend to make a very sharp distinction between spiritual life and everyday life. They will label a man as "worldly" or "spiritual," and they generally make a hard-and-fast division between the two. So if one speaks about meditation, awareness, and understanding, then the ordinary person, who has never heard of such things, obviously would not have a clue and he probably would not even be sufficiently interested to listen properly. And because of this division he finds it almost impossible to take the next step and he can never really communicate with himself or with others in this particular way. The teachings, the instructions, the mystical writings, may all be very profound, but somehow he is never able to penetrate through to them, so he comes to a kind of dead end. Either a man is "spiritually inclined" or else he is a "worldly person," and there seems to be no way to bridge this gap. I think this is one of the great hindrances to the birth of bodhi. It also happens that people who have started on the path have

doubts and want to give it up. They may perhaps think that they would be happier if they gave it up and just remained agnostics.

So there is something not quite flowing, there is a failure to relate one thing to another, and this is what prevents us from giving birth to bodhi. Therefore we have to study this problem. We have to provide some clue for the man in the street, some way of finding out, some concept that he can understand and which will still be related to his life and will still be part of his life. Of course, there is no magic word or miraculous thing which could suddenly change his mind. One wishes it were possible, by saying only a few words, to enlighten someone, but even great teachers like Christ or Buddha were unable to perform such a miracle. They had always to find the right opportunity and create the right situation. If one examines the character of the person and one studies the blockage, the difficulties, then one simply goes further and further, because one is trying to untie a knot which is already there, and it would take ages and ages to unravel this entanglement and confusion. So one has to approach from another angle and start off by just accepting the character of that person, who may be completely worldly-minded, and then choose one particular aspect of his activity or mentality and use it as a ladder, as an anchor, as a vehicle, so that even the man in the street could give birth to bodhi. It is all very well to say that Buddha was an awakened person and that he is continuously living as far as the essence of the Buddha and his teachings are concerned—the universal law permeates everything—and to talk of the sangha, the highest and most open community which can influence things. But still the majority of people could never even think of taking refuge along those lines. So somehow one has to find the right approach. And one always finds that a person has within himself a specific character. He may be regarded as having no intelligence and no personality at all, but each person in fact has his own particular quality. It may be a great kind of violence, or great laziness, but one has just to take that particular quality and not regard it necessarily as a fault or blockage, for that *is* the bodhi which is in him; it is the seed, or rather the full potentiality for giving birth—he is already impregnated by bodhi. As one particular scripture says, "Since buddha nature pervades all beings there is no such thing as an unsuitable candidate."

This scripture was composed after the death of Buddha, after the Parinirvana. In the world of gods and men everyone began to doubt

whether the teachings of Buddha would remain, because it seemed that now the wonderful teacher was gone and all that remained was a group of mendicant monks, and they did not seem to do very much, or they were not able to do so. So one of the disciples was lamenting and saying that now the world of samsara will go on and on, with its waves of passion, desire, hatred, and delusion; we will never have the chance to hear the Buddha's teaching and instructions, we are again plunged into darkness. So what shall we do? And as he lamented the answers came to his mind, that Buddha had never died, that his teaching is always present, and that the birth and death of Buddha is merely a concept, an idea. In fact, no one is excluded and all beings—anyone who possesses consciousness, anyone who possesses mind or the unconscious mind—all are candidates for bodhisattvahood, anyone can become an awakened person.

In this sense there is no such thing as a "secret doctrine" or a teaching which is only for the few. As far as the teaching is concerned it is always open; so open in fact, so ordinary and so simple, that it is contained within the character of that particular person. He may be habitually drunk or habitually violent, but that character is his potentiality. And in order to help give birth to bodhi, one must first of all respect that person's character and open one's heart to that violence in him. Then one must go into him fully and respect him so that the energetic, the dynamic aspect of violence can be made to serve as the energy aspect of the spiritual life. In this way the first step is taken and the first link is made. Probably the person feels very bad, that he is doing something wrong, or that something is not quite right. He may feel that he has big difficulties, that he has a problem which he wants to solve. But he cannot solve it, and probably in his search for a solution he merely substitutes other activities for the ones he has renounced. Therefore it is through simple, direct, and ordinary things in the person's mind and behavior that he arrives at the realization of the awakened state of mind.

Of course one cannot apply this in a general way. It is no use generalizing or trying to explain philosophical concepts to a man in his state. One has to study that particular moment of the person, that very moment of nowness. And there is always a kind of spark, a kind of gap. His character is not just one thing. There is active behavior, then passive, then active, continuously changing, and the first moment producing and giving birth to the next moment. So there is always a gap between these

two periods, and one has to take that as the starting point. Probably one has to begin with some form of theory, because without respecting samsara, the world of confusion, one cannot possibly discover the awakened state of mind, or nirvana. For samsara is the entrance, samsara is the vehicle for nirvana. Therefore one should say that the violent character is good. It is a wonderful thing, it is something positive. And then he begins to realize this, though at first he may be perplexed and wonder what is good in it, but somehow, if he gets beyond the fascination part of it, he at least begins to feel good; and he begins to realize that he is not just a "sinner" but that there is something very positive in him. It is exactly the same thing when one practices meditation. A person may begin to detect his own weaknesses. It may be in a mild form, as a wandering mind or planning for one's future, but certain things begin to come, and it is as though one were sitting specially to think these things over rather than to practice meditation. Through this one discovers certain things, and this is very valuable, it provides a wonderful opportunity.

It is often mentioned in the scriptures that without theories, without concepts, one cannot even start. So start with concepts and then build up theory. And then you use up the theory and it gradually gives way to wisdom, to intuitive knowledge, and that knowledge finally links with reality. So to start with, one should allow and not react against things. And if one wants to help a person, for example, there are two ways of doing it: One is that you want to help him because you want him to be different, you would like to mold him according to your idea, you would like him to follow your way. That is still compassion with ego, compassion with an object, compassion finally with results which will benefit you as well—and that is not quite true compassion. This plan to help other people may be a very good one, but nevertheless the emotional approach of wanting to save the world and bring peace is not quite enough; there has to be more than that, there has to be more depth. So first one has to start by respecting concepts and then build from there. Though actually in Buddhist teachings, concepts are generally regarded as a hindrance. But being a hindrance does not mean that it prevents anything. It is a hindrance and it is also the vehicle—it is everything. Therefore one must pay special attention to concepts.

It is said, I think in the *Lankavatara Sutra,* that unskilled farmers throw away their rubbish and buy manure from other farmers, but those who

are skilled go on collecting their own rubbish, in spite of the bad smell and the unclean work, and when it is ready to be used they spread it on their land, and out of this they grow their crops. That is the skilled way. In exactly the same way, the Buddha says, those who are unskilled will divide clean from unclean and will try to throw away samsara and search for nirvana, but those who are skilled bodhisattvas will not throw away desire and the passions and so on, but will first gather them together. That is to say, one should first recognize and acknowledge them, and study them and bring them to realization. So the skilled bodhisattva will acknowledge and accept all these negative things. And this time he really knows that he has all these terrible things in him, and although it is very difficult and unhygienic, as it were, to work on, that is the only way to start. And then he will scatter them on the field of bodhi. Having studied all these concepts and negative things, when the time is right he does not keep them anymore, but scatters them and uses them as manure. So out of these unclean things comes the birth of the seed which is realization. This is how one has to give birth. And the very idea that concepts are bad, or such and such a thing is bad, divides the whole thing, with the result that you are not left with anything at all to deal with. And in that case you either have to be completely perfect, or else battle through all these things and try and knock them all out. But when you have this hostile attitude and try to suppress things, then each time you knock one thing out another springs up in its place, and when you attack that one, another one comes up from somewhere else. There is this continual trick of the ego, so that when you try to disentangle one part of the knot, you pull on the string and only make it tighter somewhere else, so you are continually trapped in it. Therefore the thing is not to battle any more, not to try and sort out the bad things and only achieve good, but respect them and acknowledge them. So theory and concepts are very good, like wonderful manure. Through thousands and thousands of lives we have been collecting so much rubbish that now we have a wonderful wealth of this manure. It has everything in it, so it would be just the right thing to use, and it would be such a shame to throw it away. Because if you do throw it away, then all your previous life until today, maybe twenty, thirty, or forty years, will have been wasted. Not only that, but lives and lives and lives will have been wasted, so one would have a feeling of failure. All that struggle and all that collecting would have been wasted, and you would have to start all over again from the beginning. There-

fore, there would be a great feeling of disappointment, and it would be more a defeat than anything having been gained. So one has to respect the continual pattern. One may have broken away from the origin and all sorts of things may have happened. These may not be particularly good things. They are rather undesirable and negative. At this stage there are good things and bad things, but this collection contains good things disguised as bad and bad things disguised as good.

One must respect the flowing pattern of all one's past lives and the early part of one's present life right up to today. And there is a wonderful pattern in it. There is already a very strong current where many streams meet in a valley. And this river is very good and contains this powerful current running through it, so instead of trying to block it one should join this current and use it. This does not mean that one should go on collecting these things over and over again. Whoever does that would be lacking in awareness and wisdom, he would not have understood the idea of collecting manure. He could collect it together and acknowledge it, and by acknowledging it he would have reached a certain point and would understand that this manure is ready to be used.

There is a story in the teachings of tantra about two close friends who both wanted to search for the truth. They went to a master, and the master said, "Do not abandon anything, accept everything. And once having accepted, use it in the right way." And the first one thought, "Well, this is wonderful. I can go on being just the way I am." So he set up hundreds of brothels and hundreds of butcher shops and hundreds of drinking places, which in India was regarded as something that only a lower-caste person would do. He began to run all these big businesses, and he thought this was what he was supposed to do. But the other friend thought this was not quite right and he began to examine himself; and by examining himself he came to the conclusion that he had enough material already and did not have to collect any more. He did not have to do any particular practice of meditation, but by acknowledging the already existing heap, he achieved enlightenment, or at least a certain stage of realization, a kind of satori. Then one day they met each other and talked together and compared their experiences. The first one was not at all awakened; he was still struggling and collecting and doing all these things. In fact he had fallen into an even worse trap and had not even started to examine himself. But each of them was quite sure that he was right, so they both decided to go and consult the teacher. And

the teacher said "I am afraid your way is wrong" to the one who was running the businesses. And he was so disappointed that he drew his sword and murdered the teacher on the spot.

There are these two possible approaches, and there may perhaps be some confusion between the two. Nevertheless, if a person is skilled enough—not necessarily intelligent—but skilled enough and patient enough to sift through his rubbish and study it thoroughly, then he will be able to use it. So, coming back to the subject of concepts, which is a very important example, the idea behind this is to develop a positive outlook and to recognize your great wealth. And having recognized one's concepts and ideas, one must also, in a sense, cultivate them. One has a tendency to try and abandon them or throw them away. But one should cultivate them, not in the sense of reading more books and having more discussions and philosophical disputes—that would be the other way, the way of the friend who ran the businesses—but simply, since you already have enough wealth, just go through it. Just as a person who wants to buy something first has to check and see how much money he has. Or else it is like going back to your old diaries and studying them, and seeing your different stages of development, or going up to the attic and opening up all the old boxes to find the old dolls and toys that were given to you when you were three years old, and looking at them and examining them together with their associations. In this way you gain a complete understanding of what you are, and that is more important than continuously creating. The point of realization is not to try and understand only the awakened state and pretend not to understand the other side, because that becomes a way of cheating oneself. You see, you are your own best friend, your own closest friend, you are the best company for yourself. One knows one's own weaknesses and inconsistency, one knows how much wrong one has done, one knows it all in detail, so it doesn't help to try and pretend you don't know it, or to try not to think of that side and only think of the good side; that would mean that one was still storing one's rubbish. And if you store it like that you would not have enough manure to raise a crop from this wonderful field of bodhi. So you should go through and study even right back to your childhood, and of course if you have the great ability to go back to your previous lives, you should do so and try to understand them.

There is also a story about Brahma, who came one day to hear the

Buddha preach, and the Buddha asked, "Who are you?" And Brahma for the first time began to look and check into himself (Brahma personifying the ego), and when he first looked into himself he couldn't bear it. He said, "I'm Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Supreme Brahma." So Buddha asked, "Why do you come and listen to me?" And Brahma said, "I don't know." Buddha then said to him, "Now, look back into your past." So Brahma, with his wonderful ability to see his many past lives, looked; and he couldn't bear it. He simply broke down and wept in front of Buddha. Then Buddha said, "Well done, well done, Brahma! That is good." You see, this was the first time that Brahma had used his wonderful ability to see into his distant past, and so he finally saw things clearly. This does not mean that a person has to break down and feel bad about it, but it is very important to check and go through everything so that nothing is unexplored. Having started from there one gains a complete view of the whole thing—like an aerial view which takes in the whole landscape, all the trees and the road and everything—without there being anything that one pretends not to see.

One must also examine fear and expectation. If there is fear of death, one examines that; if one fears old age, one examines that. If one feels uneasy about a certain ugliness in oneself, or a certain disability or physical weakness of any kind, one examines them as well. And one should also examine one's mental image of oneself, and anything one may feel bad about. It is very painful in the beginning—as Brahma showed by breaking down—when you first go through it and see it. But this is the only way to do it. Sometimes one touches on a very painful spot where one is almost too shy to look into it, but somehow one still has to go through it. And by going into it one finally achieves a real command of oneself, one gains a thorough knowledge of oneself for the first time. Now, we have explored the negative aspects, and have also probably gained some idea of the positive side. We still have not attained anything, we have just started the basic collection of manure, and now we have to study it and see how to put it to use.

By now one has developed this positive outlook and one has achieved a certain amount of understanding, and that is what is known as real theory. It is still theory, but you do not throw it overboard. In fact you cultivate this kind of theory and you continuously work on and on intellectually; intellectualizing only up to a certain point, of course, but still working on and on—and without having reference to books or talks or

discussions. It has to be a kind of contemplation and firsthand study. One's theory then begins to develop and takes on a shape of its own. And then you begin to discover not only the positive things you have done, but also the element of bodhi which is in you. You begin to realize that you have this great ability to create such a wonderful theory. At this stage, of course, a person often feels that he has reached a state of enlightenment, a state of satori, but this is a mistake. Naturally, at this first discovery, there is great excitement, great joy, bliss, but he still has to go on. So, having gone through these things, and having studied and explored them, one finds that one's theory does not stop, as ordinary theory does after reading books on philosophy—or scriptures, for that matter. But this theory continues. There is a continual investigation, a continual finding out. Sometimes of course this theory does stop. One reaches a certain point where one becomes too much fascinated by the whole thing; one searches with too much eagerness, and then one comes to a stop and can't go any further. That doesn't mean there is a breakdown or a blockage, it means one is trying too much with an idea, one is trying too much with the inquisitive mind. Then one has to channel it differently, without the eagerness and without the fascination, but going step by step—as it says in the scriptures: at an elephant's pace. You have to walk very slowly, unemotionally. But walk with dignity, step by step, like an elephant walking in the jungle.

So, your continual struggle may be a very slow one, but Milarepa says, "Hasten slowly and you will soon arrive." By this time theory is no longer theory. Well, it is also a kind of imagination. So many imaginary things come in. And this imagination may even be a kind of hallucination, but again, one does not abandon that. One does not regard it as a wrong track, as though one had to go back to the right one. In fact, one uses imagination. So theory brings imagination, which is the beginning of intuitive knowledge. One then discovers that one has a great imaginative energy, and so one goes on, gradually, step by step. In the next stage one goes beyond just imagination—and this is not hallucination at all. There is something in us which is more real than merely imagination, though it is still colored by imagination. It is somehow ornamented by this sort of imaginary outline, but at the same time there is something in it. It is like reading a children's book, for example; it is written for children and it is entirely imaginary, but there is something in it as well. Perhaps the writer simplifies his experience, or tries to be childlike, so

one finds something in it. And the same is true of any story, for that matter. And that imagination is not just hallucination, but real imagination. If one looks back to theory, or if one traces back to the first steps one took, it may seem a bit tiring or even unnecessary, but it isn't so. One hasn't wasted time at all.

You have scattered the manure very evenly over the field and now is the time to sow the seed and wait for the crop to grow. That is the first preparation, and now one is ready to discover. And that discovery has already begun to develop. There are many questions one would like to ask and many things are still not certain. But in fact at that stage one doesn't really need to ask questions at all, perhaps one simply needs an external person to say that it is so, although the answer is already in one. The question is like the first layer, like the skin of an onion, and when you remove it the answer is there. This is what the great logician and philosopher of Buddhism, Asanga, described as "the intuitive mind." In the intuitive mind, if one studies true logic, one finds that the answers—and the opponent's attitude—are in us. So we don't have to search for the answer, because the question contains the answer in it. It is a matter of going into it in depth; that is the true meaning of logic. At this stage one has reached a kind of feeling; the imagination becomes a kind of feeling. And with that feeling it is as though one has reached the entrance hall.

Transmission

So after all your preparation you are finally ready to give birth to bodhi. And the next thing you have to do is to go to a guru, a teacher, and ask him to show you the awakened state—as if he possessed your wealth. It is as though someone else possesses your own belongings and you are asking him to give them back to you. Well, that is what it is in fact, but one has to go through the kind of ritual of it. When you have asked him, the teacher will instruct. That is what is known as transmission. The term *transmission* or *abhisheka* is used particularly in the vajrayana teachings and the teachings of Buddhist yoga. It is used a great deal in the Tibetan tradition and also in the Zen tradition. Transmission does not mean that the teacher is imparting his knowledge or his discovery to you—that would be impossible; even Buddha could not do so. But the whole point is that we stop collecting any more things, and we just manage to empty out whatever we have. And to avoid collecting any more, to avoid charging up the ego, it is necessary to ask some external person to give something, so that you feel that something is given to you. Then you don't regard it as your wealth which he is giving back to you, but as something very precious of his. So one must also be very grateful to the teacher. And that is a great protection against the ego, since you do not look on it as something discovered within yourself, but as something which someone else has given you. He gives you this gift; although in reality the transmission is not, as we said, something given to you, it is simply discovered within oneself. All the teacher can do is to create the situation. He will create the right situation and because of

this situation and environment the pupil's mind will also be in the right state, because he is already there. It is like going to the theater: Things are already built up for you—the seats and the stage and so on—so even by the very fact of going into it one feels automatically that one is taking part in some particular event. Whenever we go into a place or participate in something we become a part of it because the environment is already created. In the case of transmission the situation may be rather different, but nevertheless, there is still a certain environment. The teacher may not use words at all, or perhaps he goes to great lengths to explain the subject, or he may perform a ceremony of some kind, or else he may do something quite ridiculous.

There is the story of Naropa, the great Indian pandit, the maha pandita, or great pandit, in the University of Nalanda. He was one of the four great pandits at that particular period of Buddhist history; he was known as *the* great pandit in India—in the whole of the world for that matter. He could recite all the sacred scriptures by heart and he knew all the philosophy and everything, but he was not satisfied with himself because he was merely giving out what he had learned, but he never really learned the depths of it. So one day as he was walking on the balcony of the university he heard a group of beggars talking by the main entrance. He heard them saying that there was a great yogi called Tilopa, and when he heard this name he was quite sure that this was the right guru for him, so he decided to go in search of him. He gave gifts of food to these people and asked them where Tilopa lived. They told him where to go. But even so it took him about twelve months of searching. Each time he thought he had found the right place he was told to go somewhere else. And finally he came to a little fishing village and he asked for the great yogi Tilopa. One of the fishermen said, "Well, I don't know about a 'great yogi,' but there is a Tilopa who lives down by the river. He is very lazy and doesn't even fish, and he just lives on what the fishermen throw away—the heads and the entrails of the fish and all that." Naropa followed his directions. But when he came to the place all he saw was a beggar, a very mild-looking character, who appeared to be unable even to speak. However, he prostrated and asked him for teaching. For three days Tilopa said nothing, but finally he nodded his head. Naropa took that to mean that he accepted him as his disciple. Then Tilopa said, "Follow me," so he followed him for twelve long years and underwent many hardships and difficulties during that time. On one par-

ticular occasion Tilopa said he was very hungry. (I mention this because it is all part of transmission. You see, he was creating the right environment.) So he asked him to find some food. Now, Naropa was a very refined person—he was born in a Brahmin family—but he had to lead this kind of life, following the example of Tilopa. So he went to a village where they were having a wedding feast, or a special feast of some kind, and first he tried to beg, but it was forbidden to beg on that particular feast day. He crept into the kitchen and stole a bowl of soup and ran away and gave it to his guru. Tilopa seemed very pleased. In fact it was the first time Naropa had ever seen such a wonderful smiling expression on his face. He thought, "Well, this is wonderful. I think I'll go and fetch a second bowl." Tilopa expressed his approval and said he would like another bowl. But this time they caught Naropa and beat him and broke all his legs and arms and left him lying on the ground, half dead. A few days later Tilopa came up and said, "Well, what's the matter with you? Why didn't you come back?" He seemed rather angry. So Naropa said, "I'm dying." But his guru said, "Get up! You're not dying, and you still have to follow me for several years yet." And he got up and felt all right, and in fact nothing was wrong.

On another occasion they came to a deep canal which was infested with leeches. Tilopa said he wanted to cross over and asked Naropa to lie down across the canal to act as a bridge. So he lay down in the water. And when Tilopa had walked over him, Naropa found that his body was covered with hundreds of leeches, and he was again left lying there for several days. Things like this happened all the time, until finally, in the last month of the twelfth year, Tilopa was sitting with him one day and suddenly took off his sandal and hit him in the face with it. At that very moment the teachings of mahamudra, which means "the great symbol," came like a flash into Naropa's mind and he attained realization. After that, there was a great feast, and Tilopa told him, "That is all I can show you. All my teachings have now been transmitted to you. In the future, if anyone wants to follow the path of mahamudra, he must learn and receive instructions from Naropa. Naropa is like a second king after me." Only after that did Tilopa explain the teachings to him in detail.

So, that is one example of transmission. Of course in those days people were more patient and could afford to spend such a long time and were also prepared to do so. But the idea is not that Naropa received the teaching only at the moment when the shoe hit his head; the process

was going on all the time during those twelve long years that he spent with his teacher. All these difficulties and different stages that he went through were part of the transmission. It is a question of building up and creating the atmosphere. In the same way certain ceremonies of transmission, abhisheka ceremonies, are part of a process of creating an environment, which includes the room and the person and the very fact of saying, "In three days' time I will instruct you, and the transmission will take place then." In this way the disciple will mentally open himself. And when he has opened himself the teacher will say a few words, which probably do not mean very much. Or perhaps he will not say anything. The important thing is to create the right situation both on the teacher's part and on the pupil's part. And when the right situation is created then suddenly the teacher and pupil are not there anymore. The teacher acts as one entrance and the pupil acts as another, and when both doors are open there is a complete emptiness, a complete oneness between the two. This is what is known in Zen terminology as "the meeting of two minds." When one has finally solved the last koan, both are silent. The Zen master wouldn't say, "You are right" or "Now you've got it." He stops. And the pupil just stops. And there is a moment of silence. That is transmission—creating the right situation—that is as much as an external guru can do. It is also as much as you can do. Transmission is merely opening up on both sides, opening the whole thing. One opens oneself completely in such a way that, although it may only be for a few seconds, it somehow means a great deal. That doesn't mean one has reached enlightenment, but one has had a glimpse of what reality is. And this is not particularly exciting or startling, it is not necessarily a very moving experience. Something just opens, there is a kind of flash, and that's all. Although one sees it described in books as "great bliss" or "mahamudra" or "the awakened state of mind" or "satori"—all sorts of titles and names are given. But somehow the actual moment is very simple, very direct. It is merely a meeting of two minds. Two minds become one.

Generosity

GENEROSITY, DANA, IS one of the six paramitas, or transcendent actions. *Par* means literally "the other shore." In fact this is still used colloquially in India; par—meaning the other side of the river. *Mita* is one who got there. So *paramita* means that which has reached the other shore. Certain scholars refer to the paramitas as the six perfections. In one sense they are perfect actions, but the word *perfection* also has other connotations which are not pertinent. The aim is not to try and achieve perfection; therefore it is better to see the paramitas in terms of transcendence—as going beyond.

These six transcendent actions are the actions of the bodhisattva. *Bodhi* means the awakened state of mind, and *sattva* is the person who is on the way to the awakened state. So the word *bodhisattva* refers to those who have achieved and those who have an inclination to follow the path of compassion, the path of love. The hinayana path, the "lesser vehicle"—known as the elementary path or the narrow path—is based on discipline, the first requirement for the development of freedom. And this path disciplines not only mind, through the practice of meditation, but also speech and physical behavior. Discipline of this sort is quite different from laying down a moral code of law or moralizing in the sense of "sin" and "virtue"; it concerns acting properly, acting truly, acting thoroughly, acting according to the law of what is. So we must see this concept of discipline, or shila paramita, clearly. It becomes the basis of everything. It is, one might say, the narrow path, which is in itself a kind of simplicity. For instance, if there was only one little track through a

mountain pass and the rest of the terrain was completely overgrown with trees and bushes and so on, then we would have no difficulty at all in deciding which way to go. If there is only one track, either you go on or you turn back. The whole thing is simplified into one event, or one continuity. Therefore discipline does not limit our activities by declaring that such and such a thing is against the divine law or is immoral; it is just that there is only one way of true simplicity ahead of us. Fundamentally, discipline comes down to the shamatha practice of developing awareness, through which one merely sees what is. Every moment is now, and one acts through the experience of the present moment. We have now talked of the narrow path.

From there we come to the mahayana, the "great vehicle," which is the open path, the path of the bodhisattva. The narrow path is not merely simple and direct, but also has great character, great dignity. Building on that foundation we develop compassion. In reality compassion has nothing particularly to do with being compassionate, in the sense of being charitable or kind to one's neighbors or giving regular donations to refugees or paying subscriptions to various charitable organizations, although that may also be included. This charity is fundamental; it amounts to developing warmth within oneself. Out of his simplicity and awareness the bodhisattva develops selfless warmth. He doesn't even think in terms of his own psychological benefit; he doesn't think, "*I* would like to see him not suffering." "I" does not come into it at all. He speaks and thinks and acts spontaneously, not thinking even in terms of helping, or fulfilling any particular purpose. He does not act on "religious" or "charitable" grounds at all. He just acts according to the true, present moment, through which he develops a kind of warmth. And there is a great warmth in this awareness and also great creativity. His actions are not limited by anything, and all sorts of creative impulses just arise in him and are somehow exactly right for that particular moment. Things just happen and he simply sails through them, so there is a continual, tremendous creativity in him. That is the real act of karuna—a Sanskrit word which means "noble heart" or "compassionate heart." So in this case compassion does not refer to kindness alone, but to fundamental compassion, selfless compassion. He is not really aware of *himself,* so compassion has greater scope to expand and develop, because here there is no radiator but only radiation. And when only this radiation exists, without a radiator, it could go on and on and on, and the energy

would never be used up. It is always transformed and as it expands further and further it changes always into something else, into a new creative activity, so it goes continuously on and on. This creative transformation is not merely a theoretical or philosophical concept, but actually takes place in a practical sense, sometimes in a very simple way.

We can turn now to generosity, which arises when the bodhisattva is intoxicated by compassion and is no longer aware of himself. His mind is not merely filled with compassion, it becomes compassion, it *is* compassion. There are six activities associated with this: generosity, morality or discipline (spontaneous discipline, acting according to the true law), patience, energy, meditation or concentration, and clarity (which is also wisdom or knowing the situation). These are what is known as the paramitas which, as we said, means transcendent acts. Let me repeat that the bodhisattva is not acting to be virtuous or to overcome sin or evil; his mind is not occupied with being on the side of good or bad. In other words his activity is not limited, it is not bound or conditioned by good and bad. Hence it is transcendental, something beyond. This may sound a bit abstract, a bit difficult to grasp, and one may ask, "How can an act of generosity be transcendental? Isn't this merely a philosophical definition?" Well, no, in this case it isn't, because it does not refer only to his action. His mind simply doesn't work like that. When he acts he is completely spontaneous, free, and being-in-the-present. So he is entirely open and, as far as his mind is concerned, nonactive. Activity arises only when the situation presents itself. He may not be continually in a state of selfless awareness, but at least he acts spontaneously, he acts according to the dharma. And the definition of dharma in this sense is the true law, the law of the universe. Dispassion is the dharma. That is to say that the dharma does not involve any form of desire for achievement, so the act of generosity is performed without reference to any particular reward. Therefore generosity means not possessing.

If a man has wealth he might say, "Well, now I have an opportunity to practice generosity because I have something to practice with." But for the bodhisattva this question doesn't arise at all; it is not a question of owning anything. Generosity is simply an attitude of mind in which one does not want to possess and then distribute among people. Again, generosity refers not only to the practice of meditation, where one may feel a kind of selflessness of not holding anything back, but it is also something positive. In the scriptures Buddha speaks of the practice of

generosity by stretching the arm out and by holding the arm in. There is a story from the time of Buddha of a beggar woman who was one of the poorest beggars in India, because she was poor in kind and also poor in mind. She wanted so much, and this made her feel even poorer. One day she heard that Buddha was invited to Anathapindika's place in the Jeta Grove. Anathapindika was a wealthy householder and a great donor. So she decided to follow Buddha because she knew that he would give her food, whatever was left over. She attended the ceremony of offering food to the sangha, to Buddha, and then she sat there waiting until Buddha saw her. He turned around and asked her, "What do you want?" Of course he knew, but she actually had to admit and say it. And she said, "I want food. I want you to give me what is left over." And Buddha said, "In that case you must first say no. You have to refuse when I offer it to you." He held out the food to her, but she found it very difficult to say no. She realized that in all her life she had never said no. Whenever anyone had anything or offered her anything, she had always said, "Yes, I want it." So she found it very difficult to say no, as she was not at all familiar with that word. After great difficulty she finally did say no, and then Buddha gave her the food. And through this she realized that the real hunger inside her was the desire to own, grasp, possess, and want. This is an example of how one can practice generosity. And from that point of view one can practice generosity toward oneself, because the point here is to free oneself from this possessiveness, this continual wanting.

Then, of course, the next step is giving away one's possessions. But this is not necessarily connected with austerity. It does not mean that you should not own anything at all or that you should give away what you have immediately. You could have great wealth and many possessions and you could even enjoy them and like having them and probably you have a personal interest in them—like a child's toy, or adult's toy for that matter. It isn't a question of not seeing the value of possessions, the point is that it should be equally easy to give them away. If somebody asks for a particular object that you like to have with you all the time, there should be no hesitation at all, just give it away. It is really a question of giving up this concept of possession. For there is a kind of hunger in action.

There is a story in Tibet concerning two brothers, one of whom had ninety-nine yaks while the other had only one yak. The poor brother

was quite content with his one yak. He was quite happy and thought he had great wealth. He had one yak and that was really all he needed. It was quite sufficient and he wasn't particularly afraid of losing it. In fact his enjoyment of owning it was greater than his fear of losing it, whereas the other one was always very afraid of losing his yaks. He always had to look after them, and generally you find in the highlands of Tibet that there are a lot of wolves and Himalayan mountain bears, and the yaks quite often die through the hardships of winter. There are far more obstacles there than in this part of the world when it comes to looking after animals. So one day the rich brother thought, "Well, I think I'll ask my brother a favor." You see, he was not only afraid of losing his yaks, he was also very keen on accumulating more of them. And he went to the other brother and said, "Well, I know you have only one yak, which doesn't make much difference to you. So if you didn't have one at all it wouldn't really matter very much. But if you give me your yak then I will have a hundred yaks, which means a great deal to me. I mean a hundred yaks is really something. If I had that much I would really be somebody rich and famous." So he asked the favor. And the other brother gave up the yak quite easily. He didn't hesitate; he just gave it. And this story became proverbial in Tibet to illustrate that when someone has a lot he wants more, and when someone has less he is prepared to give.

So there is this possessiveness, this psychological hunger. And this relates not only to money and wealth but to the deep-seated feeling of wanting to possess, wanting to hold on to things, wanting things definitely to belong to you. For example, supposing you are window-shopping. One person might be unhappy all the time, and when he sees things he likes, this always produces a kind of pain in his mind because he is thinking, "If only I had the money, I could buy that!" So all the time as he is walking through the shops this hunger produces great pain. Whereas another person may enjoy merely looking. So this wanting to own, wanting to possess and not being prepared to give out, is not really a weakness for any particular thing. It is more generally wanting to occupy oneself with something, and if you have lost or lose interest in that particular thing, then you always want to substitute something else in its place. It isn't particularly that you can't manage without a motorcar or central heating or whatever it may be. There is always something behind that, something fundamental, a kind of wanting to possess, wanting to

own, which is always changing and developing and substituting one thing for another. So that is the real weakness—though not exactly weakness, but more a kind of habit that one tends to form through a neurotic process of thoughts. The whole thing boils down to this overlapping of thoughts which goes on all the time in our minds. We never allow anything to really happen or take place in our mind. One thought comes and almost before we finish that another one comes in and overlaps it and then another. So we never allow any gap which would permit us to be free and really digest things. Therefore it becomes a continual demand, a continual process of creating and wanting to own. And that is why one has to develop this generosity of really opening oneself.

The next stage is perhaps a deeper form of generosity. That is to say, being prepared to share one's experience with others. Now that is a rather tricky thing because there is also a danger that you will be trying to teach somebody else what you have learned. It is rather a delicate matter. You might reveal something partly because you would like to talk about it. It may be rather exciting and perhaps you know more about it than the other person and want to show off. This is a bit tricky. Nevertheless, putting it into words—whatever you have achieved—and giving it to someone else, is the only way to develop yourself. This particularly applies to teachers. And for advanced teachers, in fact for any teachers, it is necessary not just to learn things and keep them, but to use them and put them into effect by giving them out, though not with the idea of any reward. That is what is known as the dana of dharma, where you give out all the time. Of course you have to be very careful not to give the wrong present to the wrong person. Supposing, for example, that the person is not very keen on listening to your experiences, particularly connected with meditation and so on, then you do not go on talking about it, because then it would not really be dana at all. And perhaps to such a person it would be more appropriate to give something else rather than dharma. And one has to see that with intelligence, clarity, and wisdom; the prajna paramita will have to deal with that. But on the whole one has to give out if one wants to receive anything in. A continual process of transformation takes place.

There is a tradition in Tibet that if you want to receive any teaching or instruction, you generally give some present to the guru. This does not mean, by the way, that I want to collect from the audience. But the concept behind this is that when you want something—"I would like to

receive teaching. I want to know something"—then you have to give out something as well. This also raises the point that you are not entirely a poor person who is dependent on somebody or humiliated because you just want help, but you have something great to give out. In the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism, when people went to India to translate texts and receive teachings from Indian masters, they spent first about two years collecting gold from all over Tibet. They always gave something before they received instruction. So the whole point there is that one has to realize the value of teachings, though one can't really price them at all in terms of material wealth. But one must be prepared to give out something, and one of the most important things of all, of course, is giving out ego, which is one of our most precious and valuable possessions. We have to give that out. And there are certain practices, such as prostrations, in the Tibetan tradition, where before one can practice any of the further stages of meditation one has to do a hundred thousand prostrations—this is in connection with the practice of Buddhist yoga. And the idea of prostration is giving out, surrendering, opening—a kind of emptying-out process, or preparation of the vessel or container, in order to receive. You have to open and empty out an already sound cup. That is what you have to offer, and then you can receive everything intact with complete value, with complete quality.

In the case of a teacher, of course, that is also very important, and I am sure we are all teachers in our different ways, I am sure we can always teach people in different degrees. And teachers must be prepared to learn from pupils, that is very, very important. Otherwise there is really no progress on the part of the students, because in a sense one would be too keen and interested in the process of making the pupils receive the expansion of one's own ego and wanting to produce another you, rather than helping them to develop ability of their own. So teachers must be prepared to learn from their pupils, then there is a continual rapport. Exchanging takes place all the time; then as you teach, the pupils don't get bored with you, because you develop as well. There is always something different, something new each moment, so the material never runs out. One could apply this even to technical studies and the way of teaching things. It could be mathematics or science or anything at all. If the teacher is prepared to learn from the pupil, then the pupil also becomes eager to give, so there is real love, and real communication takes place. That is the greatest generosity. One can see in the

life of Buddha that he never taught merely with a kind of pompous authority. He never just used his authority as Buddha, as the awakened person. He never taught by saying, "You are wrong and I am right." Though he did sometimes point out that this is the right path and that is wrong, using discriminative wisdom, but somehow he always encouraged discussions among his disciples. And the disciples always contributed something to his teaching, and he always communicated in a certain way and asked certain questions: "Is that so, or is it not?" And judgment was left to the pupils. And then he said "yes" or "no," but whatever the answer was he just built from there. So a continual give-and-take process took place, and I am sure one can also do this in a very similar way. Of course, when one has something to say, one would generally like to just read straight through before getting any criticisms or any kind of reaction from the other person, which is really based on a kind of secret fear, not being fully confident in oneself because one is afraid to show the folly of ego. So one tends to state it as a bald fact and just leave it. Then, when the pupils can't quite take part in it, it becomes very formal and very difficult and solemn and they don't enjoy learning. They become conscious of being taught, of being told this and that, and then somehow it ceases to be creative and it doesn't really seep into their personality and enable them to develop their own ability and knowledge.

Then of course generosity of material wealth, as we have said, is not merely a question of giving the object or giving money, but more of the attitude behind it. One generally finds in the East—and I am not saying that the Eastern way of doing things is always right, I am not using it as a kind of authority as though that is the authentic and only way to deal with things, but merely as another suggestion—that a person in the East will generally give a thing away because that is the thing he loves most, and he gives it because it really represents his heart. It is most strange the things that happen in the case of someone like myself, having been abbot of a monastery traveling round in various districts of Tibet. One has been given all sorts of things such as headdresses and ornaments, women's aprons and women's shoes and rings and so on. Not that they thought one really needed these things, but it was their precious object, something which in fact represented them. They have in them this desire to possess and that is why they give in this way. The giving and the concept of punya, merit, is not just a question of giving objects and spending a large sum of money, but also of taking part in it physically

and being wholly involved in the process of giving. As with anything else in this kind of work, such as the practice of meditation, you have to be fully involved, you have to become one with what you are doing. So it is with giving things away, no matter how small the thing is in terms of value, one must be fully involved in the giving so that a part of one's ego is also given away. Through that one reaches the paramita, the transcendental act, which is something beyond. Then one is not conscious of "virtue" and giving away things in an effort to be "religious," and one is not conscious of receiving any particular reward of good merit. If one is giving merely in order to gain merit, then that tends to build up one's ego rather than really giving anything away. So if one is able to give out one's self, ego, a part of that possessiveness and passion, then one is really practicing the dharma, which is passionlessness, and the merit automatically becomes a by-product, and one is not all the time trying to achieve merit.

Patience

PATIENCE, *KSHANTI* IN Sanskrit, is usually taken to mean forbearance and the calm endurance of pain and hardship. But in fact it means rather more than that. It is forbearing in the sense of seeing the situation and seeing that it is right to forbear and to develop patience. So kshanti has an aspect of intelligence in contrast, one might say, to an animal loaded with baggage which might still go on and on walking along the track until it just drops dead. That kind of patience is patience without wisdom, without clarity. Here we are referring to patience with clarity, and energy with the eye of understanding. Generally when we talk of patience we think of an individual person who is being patient, but it also has a great deal to do with communication. Patience can develop if there is discipline and if one can create the right situation. Then one does not merely forbear because it is painful and unpleasant and because one is just trying to get through it, but patience can develop easily with the aid of virya, or energy. Without energy one could not develop patience because there would be no strength to be patient, and this energy comes from creating the right situation, which is connected with awareness. Perhaps the word *awareness* is a little ambiguous, since it often connotes self-consciousness or just being aware of what you are doing, but in this case awareness is simply seeing the situation accurately. It does not particularly mean watching yourself speaking and acting, but rather seeing the situation as a whole, like an aerial view of a landscape which reveals the layout of the town and so on. So patience is related to discipline, which in turn is connected with awareness.

Discipline is in fact the key to everything, and sila, morality, is the source of discipline and the main function of discipline. And here there are two schools of thought: According to one, discipline is necessary and only through discipline can one learn and find the right way; according to the other school of thought, things should be allowed to develop in their own way, and if there is less discipline, if things are left to the individual's choice or instinct, then he will develop a personal interest in the subject and there will be no need to impose anything on him. Both are extreme views. Not that Buddhists like to compromise in every case; it is more a question of seeing things very clearly. Whenever there is too much discipline it is invariably being imposed by someone else. There are rules and regulations, and one is always being watched and told what to do, in which case one is not really being what one is—somebody else is merely expanding his ego and imposing his idea on you. That would be a kind of dictatorship rather than discipline, because it would be trying to force things to grow, as opposed to allowing them to grow naturally. On the other hand, if discipline is left entirely to the individual and he has to feel his own way, he would find it very difficult—except in the very rare case of a person who is very intelligent and highly controlled, in the sense of not being influenced by an irregular or neurotic pattern of thoughts, opinions, and emotions. Which is not to say that most people are mad or psychologically disturbed but this element is in everyone. There is usually a neurotic aspect which causes us in some way or another to react to a given situation and develop a neurotic way of dealing with it, which is not at all the true way. That is acting according to one's conditioning rather than according to what *is*. So in this case the person would not have the ability to develop freedom because freedom is not properly presented to him. Freedom must be presented properly. In fact the word *freedom* itself is a relative term: freedom *from* something, otherwise there is no freedom. And since it is freedom from something, one must first create the right situation, which is patience.

This kind of freedom cannot be created by an outsider or some superior authority. One must develop the ability to know the situation. In other words, one has to develop a panoramic awareness, an all-pervading awareness, knowing the situation *at that very moment*. It is a question of knowing the situation and opening one's eyes to that very moment of nowness, and this is not particularly a mystical experience or anything mysterious at all, but just direct, open, and clear perception of what *is*

now. And when a person is able to see what is now without being influenced by the past or any expectation of the future, but just seeing the very moment of now, then at that moment there is no barrier at all. For a barrier could only arise from association with the past or expectation of the future. So the present moment has no barriers at all. And then he finds there is a tremendous energy in him, a tremendous strength to practice patience. He becomes like a warrior. When a warrior goes to war he does not think of the past or his previous experience of war, nor does he think of the consequences for the future; he just sails through it and fights, and that is the right way to be a warrior. Similarly, when there is a tremendous conflict going on, one has to develop this energy combined with patience. And this is what is known as right patience with the all-seeing eye, patience with clarity.

Of course, one may find it possible to be open and mindful of the present moment when one is alone or when the right situation presents itself—say, on a sunny day or a pleasant evening, or in good company, or reading a suitable book or something of that nature, where the situation is right or closer to what one wants to do—then it is easier. But often it does not happen like that. Perhaps one is in the wrong company, or perhaps one is terribly depressed or very disturbed in some way, but one has to see the sameness of the two aspects. Of course, this is very easy to talk about and rather difficult to do. The thing is that even when the situation appears to be favorable, such as right here in the country where everything is quiet and there is no noise, still one is somehow never able to escape from emotional disturbances and depression and the great collection of things in one's mind. Partly these are interdependent with other people, and partly it is because one is not able to be open and develop enough strength of patience. Therefore the whole thing tends to split off as a separate entity rather than being a part of the whole pattern of a mandala. That is to say that one should always remain in the center and not react to the situation. If one thinks something is going wrong and one would like to see it done right, that may be a very charitable thought; nevertheless there is the element of "I" involved: " 'I' would like him to be happy," or "If it makes him happy then I will be happy as well," so there is the idea of both enjoying this happiness. And either way this is a kind of indulging in happiness. So it often occurs that one is not being in the center of the potter's wheel, as it were, and if one accidentally throws clay on the edge of a potter's

wheel, it flies off. There is nothing wrong with the clay and nothing wrong with the wheel; you simply threw the clay in the wrong spot. And if you throw the clay in the center, then it makes beautiful pots. So the whole point is that you have to be in the center all the time and not expect some external person or situation to act for you. In other words, he who develops highly skilled patience will never expect anything from anyone, not because he is distrustful, but because he knows how to be at the center and he *is* the center. So in order to achieve silence you would not chase the birds away because they make a noise. In order to be still you would not stop the movement of air or the rushing river, but accept them and you will yourself be aware of the silence. Just accept them as part of the establishment of silence. So the mental aspect of the noise of birds affects the psychological aspect in you. In other words, the noise that birds make is one factor, and one's psychological concept of noise is another. And when one can deal with that side, the noise of birds becomes merely audible silence. So the whole point is that one should not expect anything from outside, one should not try to change the other person or try to put across one's opinions. One should not try to convince a person at the wrong moment, when one knows he already has a very clear idea of his own, or it is simply not the right moment for your words to get through to him. There is an analogy of two people walking barefoot along a very rough road, and one thought it would be very good to cover the whole road with leather so it would be very soft, but the other one, who was wiser, said, "No, I think if we covered our feet with leather that would be the same." So that is patience, which is not being distrustful, but is a matter of not expecting anything and not trying to change the situation outside oneself. And that is the only way to create peace in the world. If you yourself are prepared to step into it and to accept, then somebody else makes the same contribution. So if a hundred people did the same the whole thing would become right.

There is a Tibetan story that there were once a hundred and one soldiers, and one of them, who was quite young, happened to be the son of the commander-in-chief. And his father said to him, "You seem to be late. All the others have saddled their horses, so how about you?" And he answered and said, "Well, if a hundred people can saddle their hundred horses so quickly, then one person will not take very long." But of course they had all saddled their horses at the same time, so he was left behind. So if one expects the external situation to change, the whole

thing becomes reversed and one finds that from all directions one is being pushed away and one is being defeated. It is like walking on ice. Sometimes, of course, one can change the situation with certain people—perhaps by going through a series of painful steps, like complaining to the person or going to great lengths to explain that so-and-so disturbs one, or such and such a thing is not acceptable. But by the time one has gone through this rather long process, the very aim one was trying to achieve—namely peace and quiet—has long ago disappeared, and one hasn't achieved anything. So the whole thing becomes a continual rat race. Therefore patience is the way to set the example of peace. If one would like to create a quiet atmosphere somewhere, then one has to develop patience—not just bearing pain, but seeing the amusing side of that situation where one finds oneself irritated. And if one is able to see that particular aspect, the ironic aspect (which is also an interesting aspect), then somehow the situation is no longer irritating and no longer intrudes on our property of silence. If one is able to accept it in a relaxed way, a quiet way, that is already the first step in producing a climate of peace and an atmosphere of quiet, and then somebody might feel that, even without saying it.

So patience is the key to the development of an open center and the establishment of a stable base for the practice of meditation. Moreover, it is very important in dealing with life, in dealing with people, and for living in the world in which you have to live. For most people patience has a rather different connotation, almost puritanical, of being cool and naive and not saying very much: Life may be painful, but one just bears it with a false smile. And that is not patience at all, because if one is not prepared to be one with the situation and see the amusing aspect, then one day this puritanical forbearance is bound to break, it is bound to burst, and then there would be no place for patience at all.

Meditation

MEDITATION IS A vast subject and there have been many developments throughout the ages and many variations among the different religious traditions. But broadly speaking the basic character of meditation takes one of two forms. The first stems from the teachings which are concerned with the discovery of the nature of existence; the second concerns communication with the external or universal concept of God. In either case meditation is the only way to put the teachings into practice.

Where there is the concept of an external, "higher" being, there is also an internal personality—which is known as "I" or the ego. In this case meditation practice becomes a way of developing communication with an external being. This means that one feels oneself to be inferior and one is trying to contact something higher, greater. Such meditation is based on devotion. This is basically an inward or introverted practice of meditation, which is well known in the Hindu teachings where the emphasis is on going into the inward state of samadhi, into the depths of the heart. One finds a similar technique practiced in the Orthodox teachings of Christianity, where the prayer of the heart is used and concentration on the heart is emphasized. This is a means of identifying oneself with an external Being and necessitates purifying oneself. The basic belief is that one is separate from God, but there is still a link, one is still part of God. This confusion sometimes arises, and in order to clarify it one has to work inward and try to raise the standard of individuality to the level of a higher consciousness. This approach makes use of emo-

tions and devotional practices which are aimed at making contact with God or gods or some particular saint. These devotional practices may also include the recitation of mantra.

The other principal form of meditation is almost entirely opposite in its approach, though finally it might lead to the same results. Here there is no belief in higher and lower; the idea of different levels, or of being in an underdeveloped state, does not arise. One does not feel inferior, and what one is trying to achieve is not something higher than oneself. Therefore the practice of meditation does not require an inward concentration on the heart. There is no centralizing concept at all. Even such practices as concentrating on the chakras, or psychic centers of the body, are approached in a different way. Although in certain teachings of Buddhism the concept of chakras is mentioned, the practices connected with them are not based on the development of an inward center. So this basic form of meditation is concerned with trying to see what *is*. There are many variations on this form of meditation, but they are generally based on various techniques for opening oneself. The achievement of this kind of meditation is not, therefore, the result of some long-term, arduous practice through which we build ourselves up into a "higher" state, nor does it necessitate going into any kind of inner trance state. It is rather what one might call "working meditation" or extrovert meditation, where skillful means and wisdom must be combined like the two wings of a bird. This is not a question of trying to retreat from the world. In fact without the external world, the world of apparent phenomena, meditation would be almost impossible to practice, for the individual and the external world are not separate, but merely coexist together. Therefore the concept of trying to communicate and trying to become one with some higher being does not arise.

In this kind of meditation practice the concept of nowness plays a very important part. In fact, it is the essence of meditation. Whatever one does, whatever one tries to practice, is not aimed at achieving a higher state or at following some theory or ideal, but simply, without any object or ambition, trying to see what is here and now. One has to become aware of the present moment through such means as concentrating on the breathing, a practice which has been developed in the Buddhist tradition. This is based on developing the knowledge of nowness, for each respiration is unique, it is an expression of *now*. Each breath is separate from the next and is fully seen and fully felt, not in a

visualized form, nor simply as an aid to concentration, but it should be fully and properly dealt with. Just as a very hungry man, when he is eating, is not even conscious that he is eating food. He is so engrossed in the food that he completely identifies himself with what he is doing and almost becomes one with the taste and enjoyment of it. Similarly with the breathing, the whole idea is to try and see through that very moment in time. So in this case the concept of trying to become something higher does not arise at all, and opinions do not have much importance. In a sense opinions provide a way to escape; they create a kind of slothfulness and obscure one's clarity of vision. The clarity of our consciousness is veiled by prefabricated concepts and whatever we see we try to fit into some pigeonhole or in some way make it fit in with our preconceived ideas. So concepts and theories—and, for that matter, theology—can become obstacles. One might ask, therefore, what is the point of studying Buddhist philosophy? Since there are scriptures and texts and there is surely some philosophy to believe in, wouldn't that also be a concept? Well, that depends on the individual, but basically it is not so. From the start one tries to transcend concepts, and one tries, perhaps in a very critical way, to find out what *is*. One has to develop a critical mind which will stimulate intelligence. This may at first cause one to reject what is said by teachers or what is written in books, but then gradually one begins to feel something and to find something for oneself. That is what is known as the meeting of imagination and reality, where the feeling of certain words and concepts meets with intuitive knowledge, perhaps in a rather vague and imprecise way. One may be uncertain whether what one is learning is right or not, but there is a general feeling that one is about to discover something. One cannot really start by being perfect, but one must start with something. And if one cultivates this intelligent, intuitive insight, then gradually, stage by stage, the real intuitive feeling develops and the imaginary or hallucinatory element is gradually clarified and eventually dies out. Finally that vague feeling of discovery becomes very clear, so that almost no doubt remains. Even at this stage it is possible that one may be unable to explain one's discovery verbally or write it down exactly on paper, and in fact if one tried to do so it would be limiting one's scope and would be rather dangerous. Nevertheless, as this feeling grows and develops one finally attains direct knowledge, rather than achieving something which is separate from oneself. As in the analogy of the hungry man, you be-

come one with the subject. This can only be achieved through the practice of meditation. Therefore meditation is very much a matter of exercise—it is a working practice. It is not a question of going into some inward depth, but of widening and expanding outward.

These are the basic differences between the two types of meditation practice. The first may be more suitable for some people and the second may be more suitable for others. It is not a question of one being superior or more accurate than the other. But for any form of meditation one must first overcome that great feeling of demand and ambition which acts as a major obstacle. Making demands on a person, such as a guru, or having the ambition to achieve something out of what one is doing, arises out of a built-up desire or wantingness; and that wantingness is a centralized notion. This centralized notion is basically blind. It is like having only one eye, and that one eye being situated in the chest. When you try to walk you cannot turn your head around and you can only see a limited area. Because you can see in only one direction the intelligence of turning the head is lacking. Therefore there is a great danger of falling. This wantingness acts as a veil and becomes an obstacle to the discovery of the moment of nowness, because the wanting is based either on the future or on trying to continue something which existed in the past, so the nowness is completely forgotten. There may be a certain effort to focus on the nowness, but perhaps only twenty percent of the consciousness is based on the present and the rest is scattered into the past or the future. Therefore there is not enough force to see directly what is there.

Here, too, the teaching of selflessness plays a very important part. This is not merely a question of denying the existence of ego, for ego is something relative. Where there is an external person, a higher being, or the concept of something which is separate from oneself, then we tend to think that because there is something outside there must be something here as well. The external phenomenon sometimes becomes such an overwhelming thing and seems to have all sorts of seductive or aggressive qualities, so we erect a kind of defense mechanism against it, failing to see that that is itself a continuity of the external thing. We try to segregate ourselves from the external, and this creates a kind of gigantic bubble in us which consists of nothing but air and water or, in this case, fear and the reflection of the external thing. So this huge bubble prevents any fresh air from coming in, and that is "I"—the ego. So in that sense there is the existence of ego, but it is in fact illusory. Having

established that, one generally wants to create some external idol or refuge. Subconsciously one knows that this "I" is only a bubble and it could burst at any moment, so one tries to protect it as much as one can—either consciously or subconsciously. In fact we have achieved such skill at protecting this ego that we have managed to preserve it for hundreds of years. It is as though a person has a very precious pair of spectacles which he puts in a box or various containers in order to keep it safe, so that even if other things are broken this would be preserved. He may feel that other things could bear hardship, but he knows that this could not, so this would last longer. In the same way, ego lasts longer just because one feels it could burst at any time. There is fear of it being destroyed because that would be too much, one would feel too exposed. And there is such character, such a fascinating pattern established outside us, although it is in fact our own reflection. That is why the concept of egolessness is not really a question of whether there is a self or not, or, for that matter, whether there is the existence of God or not; it is rather the taking away of that concept of the bubble. Having done so, one doesn't have to deliberately destroy the ego or deliberately condemn God. And when that barrier is removed one can expand and swim through straightaway. But this can only be achieved through the practice of meditation, which must be approached in a very practical and simple way. Then the mystical experience of joy or grace, or whatever it might be, can be found in every object. That is what one tries to achieve through vipassana, or "insight" meditation practice. Once we have established a basic pattern of discipline and we have developed a regular way of dealing with the situation—whether it is breathing or walking or what have you—then at some stage the technique gradually dies out. Reality gradually expands so that we do not have to use the technique at all. And in this case one does not have to concentrate inward, but one can expand outward more and more. And the more one expands, the closer one gets to the realization of centerless existence.

That is the basic pattern of this kind of meditation, which is based on three fundamental factors: first, not centralizing inward; second, not having any longing to become higher; and third, becoming completely identified with here and now. These three elements run right through the practice of meditation, from the beginning up to the moment of realization.

Q. You mentioned nowness in your talk, and I was wondering how it is possible to become aware of the absolute through awareness of a relative moment in time?

A. Well, we have to start by working through the relative aspect, until finally this nowness takes on such a living quality that it is no longer dependent on a relative way of expressing nowness. One might say that *now* exists all the time, beyond the concept of relativity. But since all concepts are based on the idea of relativity, it is impossible to find any words which go beyond that. So nowness is the only way to see directly. First it is between the past and the future—now. Then gradually one discovers that nowness is not dependent on relativity at all. One discovers that the past does not exist, the future does not exist, and everything happens now. Similarly, in order to express space one might have first to create a vase, and then one has to break it, and then one sees that the emptiness in the vase is the same as the emptiness outside. That is the whole meaning of technique. At first that nowness is, in a sense, not perfect. Or one might even say that the meditation is not perfect, it is a purely man-made practice. One sits and tries to be still and concentrates on the breathing, and so on. But then, having started in that way, one gradually discovers something more than that. So the effort one has put into it—into the discovery of nowness, for example—would not be wasted, though at the same time one might see that it was rather foolish. But that is the only way to start.

Q. For meditation, would a student have to rid himself of ego before he started, or would this come naturally as he is studying?

A. This comes naturally, because you can't start without ego. And basically ego isn't bad. Good and bad doesn't really exist anywhere, it is only a secondary thing. Ego is, in a sense, a false thing, but it isn't necessarily bad. You have to start with ego, and use ego, and from there it gradually wears out, like a pair of shoes. But you have to use it and wear it out thoroughly, so it is not preserved. Otherwise, if you try to push ego aside and start perfect, you may become more and more perfect in a rather one-sided way, but the same amount of imperfection is building up on the other side, just as creating intense light creates intense darkness as well.

Q. You mentioned that there are two basic forms of meditation—devotional practice, or trying to communicate with something higher,

and the other one, which is simply awareness of what is—but this devotional practice still plays a part in Buddhism as well, and you have devotional chants and so on, so I am not quite sure how this comes in. I mean, the two appear to be different, so can they in fact be combined?

A. Yes, but the kind of devotional practice which is found in Buddhism is merely a process of opening, of surrendering the ego. It is a process of creating a container. I don't mean to condemn the other kind of devotion, but if one looks at it from the point of view of a person who has an unskillful way of using that technique, then devotion becomes a longing to free oneself. One sees oneself as being very separate, and as being imprisoned and imperfect. One regards oneself as basically bad, and one is trying to break out. In other words the imperfection part of oneself is identified with "I" and anything perfect is identified with some external being, so all that is left is trying to get through the imprisonment. This kind of devotion is an overemphasized awareness of ego, the negative aspect of ego. Although there are hundreds of variations of devotional practice in Buddhism, and there are many accounts of devotion to gurus, or being able to communicate with the guru, and of achieving the awakened state of mind through devotion. But in these cases devotion is always begun without centralizing on the ego. In any chants or ceremonies, for example, which make use of symbolism, or the visualization of Buddhas, before any visualization is created there is first a formless meditation, which creates an entirely open space. And at the end one always recites what is known as the threefold wheel: "I do not exist; the external visualization does not exist; and the act of visualizing does not exist"—the idea being that any feeling of achievement is thrown back to the openness, so one doesn't feel that one is collecting anything. I think that is the basic point. One may feel a great deal of devotion, but that devotion is a kind of abstract form of devotion, which does not centralize inwardly. One simply identifies with that feeling of devotion, and that's all. This is perhaps a different concept of devotion, where no center exists, but only devotion exists. Whereas, in the other case, devotion contains a demand. There is an expectation of getting something out of it in return.

Q. Is there not a great fear generated when we get to this point of opening up and surrendering?

A. Fear is one of the weapons of ego. It protects the ego. If one

reaches the stage where one begins to see the folly of ego, then there is fear of losing the ego, and fear is one of its last weapons. Beyond that point fear no longer exists, because the object of fear is to frighten somebody, and when that somebody is not there, then fear loses its function. You see, fear is continually given life by your response, and when there is no one to respond to the fear—which is ego loss—then fear ceases to exist.

Q. You are talking about the ego as an object?

A. In what sense?

Q. In the sense that it is part of the external environment.

A. Ego is, as I have already said, like a bubble. It is an object up to a point, because although it does not really exist—it is an impermanent thing—it in fact shows itself as an object more than actually being one. That is another way of protecting oneself, of trying to maintain ego.

Q. This is an aspect of the ego?

A. Yes.

Q. Then you can't destroy the ego, or you would lose the power to recognize, the power to cognate.

A. No, not necessarily. Because ego does not contain understanding, it does not contain any insight at all. Ego exists in a false way all the time and can only create confusion, whereas insight is something more than that.

Q. Would you say that ego is a secondary phenomenon rather than a primary phenomenon?

A. Yes, very much so. In a sense ego is wisdom, but ego happens to be ignorant as well. You see, when you realize that you are ignorant, that is the beginning of the discovery of wisdom—it is wisdom itself.

Q. How does one decide in oneself whether ego is ignorance or wisdom?

A. It is not really a question of deciding. It is simply that one sees in that way. You see, basically there is no solid substance, although we talk about ego existing as a solid thing having various aspects. But in fact it merely lives through time as a continual process of creation. It is continually dying and being reborn all the time. Therefore ego doesn't really exist. But ego also acts as a kind of wisdom: When ego dies, that is wisdom itself, and when ego is first formulated that is the beginning of igno-

rance itself. So wisdom and ego are not really separate at all. It seems rather difficult to define, and in a way one would be happier if there were clear-cut black and white, but somehow that is not the natural pattern of existence. There is no clear-cut black and white at all, and all things are interdependent. Darkness is an aspect of light, and light is an aspect of darkness, so one can't really condemn one side and build up everything on the other. It is left entirely to the individual to find his own way, and it is possible to do so. It is the same for a dog who has never swum—if he were suddenly thrown in the water he could swim. Similarly, we have a kind of spiritual instinct in us and if we are willing to open ourselves then somehow we find our way directly. It is only a question of opening up and one doesn't have to have a clear-cut definition at all.

Q. Would you care to sum up the purpose of meditation?

A. Well, meditation is dealing with purpose itself. It is not that meditation is for something, but it is dealing with the aim. Generally we have a purpose for whatever we do: Something is going to happen in the future, therefore what I am doing now is important—everything is related to that. But the whole idea of meditation is to develop an entirely different way of dealing with things, where you have no purpose at all. In fact meditation is dealing with the question of whether or not there is such a thing as purpose. And when one learns a different way of dealing with the situation, one no longer has to have a purpose. One is not on the way to somewhere. Or rather, one is on the way and one is also at the destination at the same time. That is really what meditation is for.

Q. Would you say, then, that it would be a merging with reality?

A. Yes, because reality is there all the time. Reality is not a separate entity, so it is a question of becoming one with reality, or of being in reality—not *achieving* oneness, but becoming identified with it. One is already a part of that reality, so all that remains is to take away the doubt. Then one discovers that one has been there all the time.

Q. Would it be correct to describe it as the realization that the visible is not reality?

A. The visible? Can you define that a bit more?

Q. I am thinking of William Blake's theory of the merging of the observer with the observed, and the visible not being the reality at all.

A. Visible things in this sense are reality. There is nothing beyond

nowness, therefore what we see is reality. But because of our usual way of seeing things, we do not see them exactly as they are.

Q. Would you say, then, that each person is an individual and must find an individual way toward that?

A. Well, I think that brings us back to the question of ego, which we have been talking about. You see, there is such a thing as personality, in a way, but we are not really individuals as separate from the environment, or as separate from external phenomena. That is why a different approach is necessary. Whereas, if we were individuals and had no connection with the rest of things, then there would be no need for a different technique which would lead to oneness. The point is that there is appearance of individuality, but this individuality is based on relativity. If there is individuality, there must also be oneness as well.

Q. Yes, but it is the individuality that makes for oneness. If we weren't individuals, we couldn't be one. Is that so?

A. Well, the word *individual* is rather ambiguous. At the beginning individuality may be overemphasized, because there are various individual aspects. Even when we reach the stage of realization there is perhaps an element of compassion, an element of wisdom, an element of energy, and all sorts of different variations. But what we describe as an individual is something more than that. We tend to see it as one character with many things built onto it, which is a way of trying to find some sort of security. When there is wisdom, we try to load everything onto it, and it then becomes an entirely separate entity, a separate person—which is not so. But still there are individual aspects, there is individual character. So in Hinduism one finds different aspects of God, different deities, and different symbols. When one attains oneness with reality, that reality is not just one single thing, but one can see from a very wide angle.

Q. If a student has a receptive mind and wishes to make himself at one with nature, can he be taught how to meditate, or does he have to develop his own form?

A. Nature? How do you mean?

Q. If he wishes to study, can he accept other people's teaching, or can he develop them himself?

A. In fact it is necessary to receive oral instruction, oral teaching. Though he must learn to give before he can accept anything, he must learn to surrender. Second, he finds that the whole idea of learning stim-

ulates his understanding. Also this avoids building up a great feeling of achievement, as though everything is "my own work"—the concept of the self-made man.

Q. Surely that is not sufficient reason for going to receive instruction from a teacher, just to avoid the feeling that otherwise everything is self-made. I mean, in the case of someone like Ramana Maharshi, who attained realization without an external teacher, surely he shouldn't go and find a guru just in case he might become big-headed?

A. No. But he is exceptional, that is the whole point. There is a way, it is possible. And basically no one can transmit or impart anything to anybody. One has to discover within oneself. So perhaps in certain cases people could do that. But building up on oneself is somehow similar to ego's character, isn't it? One is on rather dangerous ground. It could easily become ego's activity, because there is already the concept of "I" and then one wants to build up more on that side. I think—and this may sound simple, but it is really the whole thing—that one learns to surrender gradually, and that surrendering the ego is a very big subject. Also, the teacher acts as a kind of mirror, the teacher gives back one's own reflection. Then for the first time you are able to see how beautiful you are, or how ugly you are.

Perhaps I should mention here one or two small points about meditation, although we have already discussed the general background of the subject.

Generally, meditation instruction cannot be given in a class. There has to be a personal relationship between teacher and pupil. Also there are certain variations within each basic technique, such as awareness of breathing. But perhaps I should briefly mention the basic way of meditating, and then, if you want to go further, I am sure you could do so and receive further instruction from a meditation teacher.

As we have mentioned already, this meditation is not concerned with trying to develop concentration. Although many books on Buddhism speak of such practices as shamatha as being the development of concentration, I think this term is misleading in a way. One might get the idea that the practice of meditation could be put to commercial use, and that one would be able to concentrate on counting money or something like that. But meditation is not just for commercial uses; it is a different con-

cept of concentration. You see, generally one cannot really concentrate. If one tries very hard to concentrate, then one needs the thought that is concentrating on the subject and also something which makes that accelerate further. Thus there are two processes involved and the second process is a kind of watchman, which makes sure that you are doing it properly. That part of it must be taken away, otherwise one ends up being more self-conscious and merely aware that one is concentrating, rather than actually being in a state of concentration. This becomes a vicious circle. Therefore one cannot develop concentration alone, without taking away the centralized watchfulness, the trying to be careful—which is ego. So the shamatha practice, the awareness of breathing, is not concerned with concentrating on the breathing.

The cross-legged posture is the one generally adopted in the East, and if one can sit in that position, it is preferable to do so. Then one can train oneself to sit down and meditate anywhere, even in the middle of a field, and one need not feel conscious of having a seat or of trying to find something to sit on. Also, the physical posture does have a certain importance. For instance, if one lies down, this might inspire one to sleep; if one stands, one might be inclined to walk. But for those who find it difficult to sit cross-legged, sitting on a chair is quite good, and, in fact, in Buddhist iconography the posture of sitting on a chair is known as the Maitreya asana, so it is quite acceptable. The important thing is to keep the back straight so that there is no strain on the breathing. And for the breathing itself it is not a matter of concentrating, as we have already said, but of trying to become one with the feeling of breath. At the beginning some effort is needed, but after practicing for a while the awareness is simply kept on the verge of the movement of breath; it just follows it quite naturally and one is not trying particularly to bind the mind to breathing. One tries to feel the breath—out-breathing, in-breathing, out-breathing, in-breathing—and it usually happens that the out-breathing is longer than the in-breathing, which helps one to become aware of space and the expansion of breathing outward.

It is also very important to avoid becoming solemn and to avoid the feeling that one is taking part in some special ritual. One should feel quite natural and spontaneous, and simply try to identify oneself with the breath. That is all there is to it, and there are no ideas or analyzing involved. Whenever thoughts arise, just observe them *as thoughts*, rather than as being a subject. What usually happens when we have thoughts

is that we are not aware that they are thoughts at all. Supposing one is planning one's next holiday trip: One is so engrossed in the thoughts that it is almost as though one were already on the trip and one is not even aware that these are thoughts. Whereas, if one sees that this is merely thought creating such a picture, one begins to discover that it has a less real quality. One should not try to suppress thoughts in meditation, but one should just try to see the transitory nature, the translucent nature of thoughts. One should not become involved in them, nor reject them, but simply observe them and then come back to the awareness of breathing. The whole point is to cultivate the acceptance of everything, so one should not discriminate or become involved in any kind of struggle. That is the basic meditation technique, and it is quite simple and direct. There should be no deliberate effort, no attempt to control and no attempt to be peaceful. This is why breathing is used. It is easy to feel the breathing, and one has no need to be self-conscious or to try and do anything. The breathing is simply available and one should just feel that. That is the reason why technique is important to start with. This is the primary way of starting, but it generally continues and develops in its own way. One sometimes finds oneself doing it slightly differently from when one first started, quite spontaneously. This is not classified as an advanced technique or a beginner's technique. It simply grows and develops gradually.

Wisdom

PRAJNA. WISDOM. PERHAPS the English word has a slightly different sense. But the word used in Tibetan, *sherab,* has a precise meaning: *she* means knowledge, knowing, and *rab* means ultimate—so primary or first knowledge, the higher knowledge. So sherap is not specific knowledge in any technical or educational sense of knowing the theology of Buddhism, or knowing how to do certain things, or knowing the metaphysical aspect of the teaching. Here knowledge means knowing the situation, *knowingness* rather than actual knowledge. It is knowledge without a self, without the self-centered consciousness that one is knowing—which is connected with ego. So this knowledge—prajna or sherap—is broad and farseeing, though at the same time it is tremendously penetrating and exact, and it comes into every aspect of our life. It therefore plays a very important part in our development, as does upaya, method, which is the skillful means for dealing with situations in the right way. These two qualities, in fact, are sometimes compared to the two wings of a bird. Upaya is also described in the scriptures as being like a hand, which is skillful, and prajna as being axlike, because it is sharp and penetrating. Without the ax it would be impossible to cut wood: One would simply hurt one's hand. So one may have the skillful means without being able to put it into effect. But if there is also prajna, which is like an eye, or like light, then one is able to act properly and skillfully. Otherwise the skillful means might become foolish, for only knowledge makes one wise. In fact upaya by itself could make the greatest of fools, because everything would still be based on ego. One might

see the situation up to a point and be partially able to deal with it, but one would not see it with clarity and without being affected by past and future, and one would miss the immediate nowness of the situation.

But perhaps we should examine how to develop this knowingness, or sherap, before we go into any further details. Now, there are three methods which are necessary for the cultivation of sherap, and these are known in Tibetan as töpa, sampa, and gompa. *Töpa* means to study the subject, *sampa* means to contemplate it, and *gompa* means to meditate and develop samadhi through it. So first töpa—study—which is generally associated with technical knowledge and the understanding of the scriptures and so on. But true knowledge goes much further than that, as we have already seen. And the first requirement for töpa is to develop a kind of bravery, to become a great warrior. We have mentioned this concept before, but perhaps it would be as well to go into it in more detail. Now, when the true warrior goes into battle he does not concern himself with his past and with recollections of his former greatness and strength, nor is he concerned with the consequences for the future and with thoughts of victory or defeat, or pain and death. The greatest warrior knows himself and has great confidence in himself. He is simply conscious of his opponent. He is quite open and fully aware of the situation, without thinking in terms of good and bad. What makes him a great warrior is that he has no opinions; he is simply aware. Whereas his opponents, being emotionally involved in the situation, would not be able to face him, because he is acting truly and sailing through their fear and is able to attack the enemy with effect. Therefore töpa, study and understanding, demands the quality of a great warrior. One should try to develop theoretical knowledge without being concerned with the past or the future. At first one's theories may be inspired by reading books, so we do not altogether dismiss learning and studying, which are very important and can provide a source of inspiration. But books can also become merely a means to escape from reality; they can provide an excuse for not really making an effort to examine things in detail for oneself. Reading can be rather like eating food. Up to a point one eats from physical necessity, but beyond that one is doing it for pleasure, because one likes the taste of food, or possibly just to fill up time: It is either breakfast time or lunchtime or teatime or time for dinner. In the development of sherap it is clear that we do not read merely to accumulate information. We should read with great openness without making judgments, and just try

to receive. The analogy is sometimes made of a child in a toy shop. He is so interested in everything that he becomes one with all the toys in the shop, and finally he has great difficulty in deciding which one to buy. He loses the very concept of having an opinion, such as "I want to buy this, I don't want to buy that." He becomes one with everything to such a point that he just can't decide. Learning should be like that, without opinions ("I like this, I don't like that"), but just accepting—not because it is in the scriptures or because some teacher says so and you have to accept it as an authority, nor because you don't have the right to criticize—but rather accepting out of sheer openness, without any obstacles. So read and study and develop a kind of inspiration from it. You can get a great deal from all kinds of books, but there is a limit, and when you develop a kind of general inspiration and self-confidence, then you should stop reading.

This is the first stage of töpa, where one develops theory. And it often happens at a certain point that this theory appears almost in the guise of experience, so that one may feel one has reached a state of spiritual ecstasy or enlightenment. There is a great excitement and one almost feels one has seen Reality itself. One may even be so carried away as to start writing great essays on the subject. But at this stage one must be very careful and try to avoid laying too much emphasis on the belief that one has made some wonderful new discovery. The exciting part of it should not be too important; the main thing is how to put your knowledge into effect, otherwise one becomes like a poor beggar who has just discovered a sack of gold. He is overcome with excitement at having found it because in his mind gold is vaguely associated with food. But he has no idea how to put it to use by buying and selling to actually obtain the food. He has never dealt with that side of it before, so it is rather a problem. Similarly, one should not be overexcited by one's discovery. One has to exercise some restraint, although this experience may be even more exciting than reaching the state of buddhahood. The trouble is that one sets such a high value on this knowledge, and by being too excited about it one is prevented from going beyond the dualistic way of seeing the situation. One attaches a great deal of importance to one's achievement, with the result that this excitement is still based on the self, on ego. Therefore one has to deal with it skillfully and even apply sherap, wisdom, to cope with the situation. So what one has found has to be put into effect immediately. It must not become a kind of tool that one

merely shows off to other people. Nor must one become addicted to it, but use it only when the need arises.

Of course this theoretical knowledge is very interesting. One can talk so much about it—there are a great many words involved—and there is great pleasure in telling other people all about it. One may spend hours and hours talking and arguing and trying to demonstrate one's theory and prove its validity. One even develops a kind of evangelical attitude of trying to convert others to one's discovery, because one is intoxicated by it.

But that is still theory. And from there we come to sampa, which is reflective meditation, or contemplating and pondering on the subject. Sampa is not meditating in the sense of developing mindfulness and so on, but meditating on the subject and digesting it properly. In other words what one has learned is not yet sufficiently developed to enable one to deal with the practical things of life. For example, one might be talking about one's great discovery when some catastrophe occurs; say, the milk boils over or something like that. It might be something quite ordinary, but it seems to be rather exciting and terrible in a way. And the transition, from discussing this subject to controlling the milk, is just too much. The one is so elevated and the other is so ordinary and mundane that somehow one finds it very difficult to put one's knowledge into effect on that level. The contrast is too great and, as a result, one becomes upset, suddenly switches off and returns to the ordinary level of ego. So in this kind of situation there is a big gap between the two things, and we have to learn to deal with this and somehow make the connection with everyday life, and to identify our activities with what we have learned in the way of wisdom and theoretical knowledge. Of course our theory is something far beyond just ordinary theory, which one might have worked out mathematically to produce a feasible proposition. One is involved and there is great feeling in it. Nevertheless this is only theory, and for that very reason one finds it difficult to put it into effect. It seems true, it seems to convey something, when you only think on that subject, but it tends to remain static. So sampa, reflective meditation, is necessary because one needs to calm down after the initial excitement of discovery and one has to find a way of relating one's newfound knowledge to oneself on a practical level. Suppose, for example, that you are just sitting at home with your family around you, having a cup of tea. Everything is normal and you are quite comfortable and contented.

Now, how are you to link your exciting discovery of transcendental knowledge with that particular situation, with the feeling of that particular moment? How can one apply sherap, wisdom, in that particular environment? Of course, one generally associates "wisdom" with some special activity and one immediately rejects the present situation. One tends to think, "Well, what I have been doing up to now is not the *real* thing, so what I must do is leave here and go to such-and-such a place. I must go and practice and digest my knowledge in the wilds of Scotland—in a Tibetan monastery." But something is not quite right, because sooner or later you have to return to that same familiar street and those same familiar people, and everyday life continues on and on; one can never escape from it. So the point is, one must not try to change the situation—in fact one cannot. Since you are not a king, who could just give an order and stop things happening, you can only deal with what is nearest to you, which is yourself. Still you have a certain amount of apparent freedom to make decisions, and you may decide to go away. But in reality that is another way of trying to stop the world, though of course everything depends on your attitude. If one is thinking only in terms of trying to learn something further and not of rejecting one's environment, that is fine. The difficulty arises because one tends to go away after a particular incident where things seemed rather unreal and unpleasant, and one has the idea that if only one were in a special environment, or situation, one would see it all clearly. But that is a way of putting things off until tomorrow, and that will not do at all. This doesn't mean, of course, that one should not go to a meditation center and study or go into retreat for a period, but it should not be trying to escape. Though one may be able to open oneself more in that particular place, that does not mean that the external situation alone could enable one to change and develop. One must not blame one's surroundings, one must not blame people, one must not blame external conditions, but without trying to change anything, just step in and try to observe. That is real sampa, real contemplation on the subject. And when one is able to overcome the romantic and emotional attitude, one discovers truth even in the kitchen sink. So the whole point is not to reject, but to make use of that very moment, whatever the situation may be, and accept it, and respect it.

If you can be as open as that, then you will learn something without fail—this can be guaranteed, not because I am such an authority to say

so, but because it is a fact. This has been tested over thousands of years; it has been proved and practiced by all the great adepts of the past. It is not something which has been achieved only by Buddha himself, but there is a long tradition of examining, studying, and testing by many great teachers, like the long process of purifying gold by beating and hammering and melting it down. Still, it is not enough to accept this on anyone's authority. One must go into it and see it for oneself. So the only thing to do is to put it into effect and start meditating on the subject of prajna, which is very important here, for prajna alone can deliver us from self-centeredness, from ego. Teachings without prajna would still bind us, as they would merely add to the world of samsara, the world of confusion. One may even practice meditation or read scriptures or attend ceremonies, but without prajna there would be no liberation, without prajna one would be unable to see the situation clearly. That is to say that without prajna one would start from the wrong point, one would start by thinking, "I would like to achieve such-and-such, and once I have learned, how happy I will be!" At this stage prajna is *critical insight,* which is the opposite of ignorance, of ignoring one's true nature. Ignorance is often represented symbolically as a pig, because the pig never turns his head but just snuffles on and on and eats whatever comes in front of him. So it is prajna which enables us not merely to consume whatever is put in front of us, but to see it with critical insight.

Finally we come to gompa, meditation. First we had theory, then contemplation, and now meditation in the sense of samadhi. The first stage of gompa is to ask oneself, "Who am I?" Though this is not really a question. In fact it is a statement, because "Who am I?" contains the answer. The thing is not to start from "I" and then want to achieve something, but to start directly with the subject. In other words one starts the real meditation without aiming for anything, without the thought, "I want to achieve." Since one does not know "Who am I?" one would not start from "I" at all, and one even begins to learn from beyond that point. What remains is simply to start on the subject, to start on what *is,* which is not really "I am." So one goes directly to that, directly to the "is." This may sound a bit vague and mysterious, because these terms have been used so much and by so many people; we must try then to clarify this by relating it to ourselves. The first point is not to think in terms of "I," "I want to achieve." Since there is no one to do

the achieving, and we haven't even grasped that yet, we should not try to prepare anything at all for the future.

There is a story in Tibet about a thief who was a great fool. He stole a large sack of barley one day and was very pleased with himself. He hung it up over his bed, suspended from the ceiling, because he thought it would be safest there from the rats and other animals. But one rat was very cunning and found a way to get to it. Meanwhile the thief was thinking, "Now, I'll sell this barley to somebody, perhaps my next-door neighbor, and get some silver coins for it. Then I could buy something else and then sell that at a profit. If I go on like this I'll soon be very rich, then I can get married and have a proper home. After that I could have a son. Yes, I shall have a son! Now what name shall I give him?" At that moment the moon had just risen and he saw the moonlight shining in through the window onto his bed. So he thought, "Ah, I shall call him Dawa" (which is the Tibetan word for moon). And at that very moment the rat had finished eating right through the rope from which the bag was hanging, and the bag dropped on the thief and killed him.

Similarly, since we haven't got a son and we don't even know "Who am I?" we should not explore the details of such fantasies. We should not start off by expecting any kind of reward. There should be no striving and no trying to achieve anything. One might then feel, "Since there is no fixed purpose and there is nothing to attain, wouldn't it be rather boring? Isn't it rather like just being nowhere?" Well, that is the whole point. Generally we do things because we want to achieve something; we never do anything without first thinking, "Because . . ." "I'm going for a holiday *because* I want to relax, I want a rest." "I am going to do such-and-such *because* I think it would be interesting." So every action, every step we take, is conditioned by ego. It is conditioned by the illusory concept of "I," which has not even been questioned. Everything is built around that and everything begins with "because." So that is the whole point. Meditating without any purpose may sound boring, but the fact is we haven't sufficient courage to go into it and just give it a try. Somehow we have to be courageous. Since one is interested and one wants to go further, the best thing would be to do it perfectly and not start with too many subjects, but start with one subject and really go into it thoroughly. It may not sound interesting, it may not be exciting all the time, but excitement is not the only thing to be gained, and one

must also develop patience. One must be willing to take a chance and in that sense make use of willpower.

One has to go forward without fear of the unknown, and if one does go a little bit further, one finds it is possible to start without thinking "because," without thinking "I will achieve something," without just living in the future. One must not build fantasies around the future and just use that as one's impetus and source of encouragement, but one should try to get the real feeling of the present moment. That is to say that meditation can only be put into effect if it is not conditioned by any of our normal ways of dealing with situations. One must practice meditation directly without expectation or judgment and without thinking in terms of the future at all. Just leap into it. Jump into it without looking back. Just start on the technique without a second thought. Techniques, of course, vary a great deal, as everything depends on the person's character. Therefore no generalized technique can be suggested.

Well, those are the methods by which wisdom, sherab, can be developed. Now, wisdom sees so far and so deep, it sees before the past and after the future. In other words wisdom starts without making any mistakes, because it sees the situation so clearly. So for the first time we must begin to deal with situations without making the blind mistake of starting from "I"—which doesn't even exist. And having taken that first step, we will find deeper insight and make fresh discoveries, because for the first time we will see a kind of new dimension: We will see that one can in fact be at the end result at the same time that one is traveling along the path. This can only happen when there is no "I" to start with, when there is no expectation. The whole practice of meditation is based on this ground. And here you can see quite clearly that meditation is not trying to escape from life, it is not trying to reach a utopian state of mind, nor is it a question of mental gymnastics. Meditation is just trying to see what *is*, and there is nothing mysterious about it. Therefore one has to simplify everything right down to the immediate present practice of what one is doing, without expectations, without judgments, and without opinions. Nor should one have any concept of being involved in a battle against "evil" or of fighting on the side of "good." At the same time one should not think in terms of being limited, in the sense of not being allowed to have thoughts or even think of "I," because that would be confining oneself in such a small space that it would amount to an

extreme form of shila, or discipline. Basically there are two stages in the practice of meditation. The first involves disciplining oneself to develop the first starting point of meditation, and here certain techniques, such as observing the breathing, are used. At the second stage one surpasses and sees the reality behind the technique of breathing, or whatever the technique may be, and one develops an approach to actual reality through the technique, a kind of feeling of becoming one with the present moment.

This may sound a little bit vague. But I think it is better to leave it that way, because as far as the details of meditation are concerned I don't think it helps to generalize. Since the techniques depend on the need of the person, they can only be discussed individually; one cannot conduct a class on meditation practice.

MUDRA

Early Poems and Songs

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To my guru Jamgön Kontrül Rinpoche

Homage to the Guru of Inner Awareness

The body of the dharma is in itself peace,
And therefore it has never emerged from itself;
And yet light is kindled in the womb,
And from the womb and within the womb the play of
 blessings arise;
That is to say, the energy of compassion begins its ceaseless
 operation.

One who follows the Buddha, dharma, and sangha is aware of emptiness; that knowledge of emptiness and of loving-kindness which is without self is called the great perfection of equanimity, by means of which one has sight of this very world as the mandala of all the buddhas.

May this guide you and be your companion in your pilgrimage to liberation; led by the light of wisdom, may you attain to the form of the Great Compassionate One.

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Introduction

IT IS A GREAT PLEASURE that I can share some of my experiences with the world. The situation presents itself with publishing a small book called *Mudra* which is a selection of some of my songs and other spontaneous poems which I wrote since 1959 in Tibetan and English. I feel particularly blessed that I was able to include some works of authentic teachers: Jigme Lingpa and Paltrül Rinpoche, which I have translated into English. As the crown jewel, this book carries these translations at its beginning. They are the vajra statement which frees the people of the dark ages from the three lords of materialism and their warfare.

It is the great blessing of the victorious lineage which has saved me from the modern parrot flock who parley such precious jewels like mahamudra, maha ati, and madhyamika teachings on the busy marketplace.

May I continuously gain health throughout my lives from the elixir of life which is the blessing of this lineage.

May I fearlessly beat the drum of the dharma to wake sentient beings who fall asleep from desire, hatred, and ignorance and deliver them to the awakened state.

CHÖGYAM THE KUSULU

MAHA ATI

THE TWO TRANSLATIONS that follow are from the work of two famed and much-loved Tibetan teachers.

Paltrül Rinpoche, who wrote the poem addressed to Abushri, lived at the end of the nineteenth century. He was a renowned Nyingma teacher, particularly interested in bringing the philosophy and practice of meditation together. He refused to live in an institutionalized monastery and became a great traveler.

Jigme Lingpa lived at the time of the fifth Dalai Lama. He was responsible for inspiring many people to study maha ati, which is the final and ultimate teaching of Buddha.

This teaching brings precise experiences of the awakened state. In fact, it surpasses concepts including the "idea" of buddha nature, which has an element of the not yet mature. The difference between them seems to be that the achievement of buddha nature is seen as a development, but with maha ati it is an experience all at once. The image of maha ati is the garuda, which emerges from the egg fully grown.

I have included these translations in the book even though they are advanced teaching because reading them seems to have inspired many people. There is no danger in presenting them because they are what is called *self-secret,* that is, one cannot understand what one is not ready for. Also they are incomplete without the transmission from a guru of the lineage.

Advice from Me to Myself

Paltrül Rinpoche

You who enjoy the union of bliss and emptiness
Seated motionless on the lunar disc
Above a beautiful hundred-petaled flower
Radiant with white light,
I pay homage to you the divine guru, Vajrasattva.

Listen, Abushri,
You miserable, daydreaming fool,
You remember how delusions
Confused you in the past?
Watch out for delusions in the present,
And don't lead a hypocritical life.

Stop unnecessary speculations.
You've made hundreds of plans
Which never came off
And only led to disappointment.
Unfinished acts are like
The overlapping action of the waves.
Stay alone and stop
Making your own head spin.

You've studied hundreds of philosophies
Without grasping any of them.
What's the point of further study?
You've studied without remembering
Anything when you needed it.
What's the point of contemplation?

Forget about your "meditation"!
It doesn't seem to be
The cure for conflicting emotions.

You may have recited the set number of mantras
But you still haven't mastered the concrete visualizations.
You may have mastered the concrete visualizations
But you still haven't loosened the grip of duality.
You may have subdued apparent evils
But you still haven't tamed your ego.

Forget your set periods of meditation
And following an obsessive schedule.
High and clear but not letting go,
Low and steady but lacking clarity,
Penetrating insight but only stabbing—
That's your meditation!

Forget the stare of concentration
And the tethered mind.
Lectures sound interesting
But they don't help your mind.
The logical mind seems sharp
But it's really the seed of confusion.
Oral instruction sounds very profound
But it doesn't help if it isn't practiced.
Forget about browsing through books
Which causes distraction and eyestrain.

You bang your antique prayer drum,
But, just for the novelty of playing (with) it.
You offer up your body,
But in fact you're still attached to it.
You play clear-sounding cymbals
But your mind is heavy and dull.
Forget about these tricks,
Attractive though they are.

Your disciples seem to be studying
But they never follow through;
One day there's a glimmer of understanding,
But the next day it has gone.
They learn one thing out of a hundred
But they don't retain even that.
Forget these apparently fervent disciples!

One's closest friend is full of love
Today and indifferent tomorrow.
He is humble one minute and proud the next.
The more one loves him the more distant he becomes.
Forget the dear friend who smiles
Because the friendship is still a novelty!

Your girlfriend puts on a smiling face
But who knows what she really feels?
For one night of pleasure it's nine months of heartache.
You can spend a month trying to bed her and still not succeed.
It's really not worth all the scandal and gossip,
So forget about her.

Never-ending chatter stirs up likes and dislikes.
It may be amusing and enjoyable
But it's merely imitating the faults of others.
The listeners seem receptive
But they may be critical at heart.
It only gives you a dry throat
So forget about idle talk!

Preaching without firsthand experience
Of the subject is like dancing on books.
The audience may seem willing to listen
But they're not really interested at all.
If you do not practice what you preach
You'll be ashamed of it sooner or later,
So forget about hollow rhetoric!

When you haven't any books
You feel the need for them;
When you have them you don't.
It's only a few pages
But to copy them is endless.
All the books in the world
Would give you no satisfaction,
So forget about copying—
Unless you get a fee for it!

One day you're relaxed,
The next you are tense.
You will never be happy
If you're swayed by people's moods.
Sometimes they are pleasant
But maybe not when you need them
And you might be disappointed.
So forget about politeness and flattery!

Political and religious activities
Are only for gentlemen.
That's not for you, my dear boy.
Remember the example of an old cow:
She's content to sleep in a barn.
You have to eat, sleep, and shit—
That's unavoidable—anything
Beyond that is none of your business.
Do what you have to do
And keep yourself to yourself.

You're as low as the lowest
So you ought to be humble.
There's a whole hierarchy above you
So stop being proud.
You shouldn't have too many close associates
Because differences would surely arise.
Since you're not involved
In religious and political activities

Don't make demands on yourself.
Give up everything, that's the point!

This teaching is given by Yogi Tri-me Lodrö from his own experience to his dear friend Abushri.* Do practice it, although there is nothing to practice. Give up everything—that's the whole point. Don't get angry with yourself even if you can't practice the dharma.

*Paltrül Rinpoche himself is both Yogi Tri-me Lodrö and Abushri; he is quite frankly talking to himself in this poem.—Ed.

Nyingthik
or The Innermost Essence
Jigme Lingpa

This is the lion's roar which subdues the rampant confusions and misunderstandings of those meditators who have abandoned materialistic attachments to meditate on the innermost essence.

The maha ati, which is beyond conceptions and transcends both grasping and letting go, is the essence of transcendental insight. This is the unchanging state of nonmeditation in which there is awareness but no clinging. Understanding this, I pay ceaseless homage to the maha ati with great simplicity.

Here is the essence of the maha ati tantra,
The innermost heart of Padmakara's teachings,
The life force of the dakinis.
This is the ultimate teaching of all the nine vehicles.[1]
It can be transmitted only by a guru of the thought lineage
And not by words alone.
Nevertheless I have written this
For the benefit of great meditators
Who are dedicated to the highest teaching.
This teaching was taken from the treasury of dharmadhatu[2]
And is not created out of attachment
To theories and philosophical abstractions.

First the pupil must find an accomplished guru with whom he has a good karmic link. The teacher must be a holder of the thought lineage

1. The nine vehicles are shravakayana, pratyekabuddhayana, mahayana, kriyayana, upayana, yogayana, mahayogayana, anuyana, and atiyana.

2. The dharmadhatu is all-encompassing space.

transmission. The pupil must have single-minded devotion and faith, which makes possible the transmission of the teacher's understanding.

The maha ati is of the greatest simplicity. It is what *is*. It cannot be shown by analogy; nothing can obstruct it. It is without limitation and transcends all extremes. It is clear-cut nowness, which can never change its shape or color. When you become one with this state the desire to meditate itself dissolves; you are freed from the chain of meditation and philosophy, and conviction is born within you. The thinker has deserted. There is no longer any benefit to be gained from "good" thoughts and no harm is to be suffered from "bad" thoughts. Neutral thoughts can no longer deceive. You become one with transcendental insight and boundless space. Then you will find signs of progress on the path. There is no longer any question of rampant confusions and misunderstandings.

Although this teaching is the king of the yanas, meditators are divided into those who are highly receptive to it, those who are less receptive, and those who are quite unreceptive. The most highly receptive pupils are hard to find, and it sometimes happens that teacher and pupil are unable to find a true meeting point. In such a case nothing is gained and misconceptions may arise concerning the nature of maha ati.

Those who are less receptive begin by studying the theory and gradually develop the feeling and true understanding. Nowadays many people regard the theory as being the meditation. Their meditation may be clear and devoid of thoughts and it may be relaxing and enjoyable, but this is merely the temporary experiencing of bliss. They think this is meditation and that no one knows any better than them. They think, "I have attained this understanding" and they are proud of themselves. Then, if there is no competent teacher, their experience is only theoretical. As it is said in the scriptures of maha ati: "Theory is like a patch on a coat—one day it will come apart." People often try to discriminate between "good" thoughts and "bad" thoughts, like trying to separate milk from water. It is easy enough to accept the negative experiences in life but much harder to see the positive experiences as part of the path. Even those who claim to have reached the highest stage of realization are completely involved with worldly concerns and fame. They are attracted by devaputra.[3] This means they have not realized the self-liberation of the six senses. Such people regard fame as extraordinary and miraculous.

3. Devaputra personifies the evil force which causes attraction to sense objects.

This is like claiming that a raven is white. But those who are completely dedicated to the practice of dharma without being concerned about worldly fame and glory should not become too self-satisfied on account of their higher developments of meditation. They must practice the guru yoga throughout the four periods of the day in order to receive the blessings of the guru and to merge their minds with his and open the eye of insight. Once this experience is attained it should not be disregarded. The yogi should thenceforth dedicate himself to this practice with unremitting perseverance. Subsequently his experience of the void will become more peaceful, or he will experience greater clarity and insight. Or again, he may begin to realize the shortcomings of discursive thoughts and thereby develop discriminating wisdom. Some individuals will be able to use both thoughts and the absence of thoughts as meditation, but it should be borne in mind that that which notes what is happening is the tight grip of ego.

Look out for the subtle hindrance of trying to analyze experiences. This is a great danger. It is too early to label all thoughts as dharmakaya. The remedy is the wisdom of nowness, changeless and unfailing. Once freed from the bondage of philosophical speculation, the meditator develops penetrating awareness in his practice. If he analyzes his meditation and postmeditation experiences he will be led astray and make many mistakes. If he fails to understand his shortcomings he will never gain the free-flowing insight of nowness, beyond all concepts. He will have only a conceptual and nihilistic view of the void, which is characteristic of the lesser yanas.

It is also a mistake to regard the void as a mirage as though it were merely a combination of vivid perceptions and nothingness. This is the experience of the lower tantras, which might be induced by practice of the svabhava mantra. It is likewise a mistake, when discursive thoughts are pacified, to overlook the clarity and regard the mind as merely blank. The experience of true insight is the simultaneous awareness of both stillness and active thoughts. According to the maha ati teaching, meditation consists of seeing whatever arises in the mind and simply remaining in the state of nowness. Continuing in this state after meditation is known as "the postmeditation experience."

It is a mistake to try to *concentrate* on emptiness and, after meditation, intellectually to regard everything as a mirage. Primordial insight is the state which is not influenced by the undergrowth of thoughts. It is a

mistake to be on guard against the wandering mind or to try and imprison the mind in the ascetic practice of suppressing thoughts.

Some people may misunderstand the term *nowness* and take it to refer to whatever thoughts happen to be in their mind at the moment. *Nowness* should be understood as being the primeval insight already described.

The state of nonmeditation is born in the heart when one no longer discriminates between meditation and nonmeditation and one is no longer tempted to change or prolong the state of meditation. There is all-pervading joy, free from all doubts. This is different from the enjoyment of sensual pleasure or from mere happiness.

When we speak of "clarity" we are referring to that state which is free from sloth and dullness. This clarity, inseparable from pure energy, shines forth unobstructed. It is a mistake to equate clarity with awareness of thoughts and the colors and shapes of external phenomena.

When thoughts are absent the meditator is completely immersed in the space on nonthought. The "absence of thoughts" does not mean unconsciousness or sleep or withdrawal from the senses, but simply being unmoved by conflict. The three signs of meditation—clarity, joy, and absence of thoughts—may occur naturally when a person meditates, but if an effort is made to create them the meditator still remains in the circle of samsara.

There are four mistaken views of the void. It is a mistake to imagine that the void is merely empty without seeing the wild space of nowness. It is a mistake to seek the buddha nature (dharmakaya) in external sources without realizing that nowness knows no path or goal. It is a mistake to try to introduce some remedy for thought without realizing that thoughts are by nature void and that one can free oneself like a snake unwinding. It is also a mistake to hold a nihilistic view that there is nothing but the void, no cause and effect of karma and no meditator nor meditation, failing to experience the void which is beyond conceptions. Those who have had glimpses of realization must know these dangers and study them thoroughly. It is easy to theorize and talk eloquently about the void, but the meditator may still be unable to deal with certain situations. In a maha ati text it is said:

> Temporary realization is like a mist which will surely disappear.

Meditators who have not studied these dangers will never derive any benefit from being in strict retreat or forcibly restraining the mind, nor

from visualizing, reciting mantras, or practicing hatha yoga. As is said in the *Phakpa Düpa Sutra,*

A bodhisattva who does not know the real meaning of solitude,
Even if he meditates for many years in a remote valley full of
poisonous snakes
Five hundred miles from the nearest habitation,
Would develop overweening pride.

If the meditator is able to use whatever occurs in his life as the path, his body becomes a retreat hut. He does not need to add up the number of years he has been meditating and does not panic when "shocking" thoughts arise. His awareness remains unbroken like that of an old man watching a child at play. As is said in a maha ati text:

Complete realization is like unchanging space.

The yogi of maha ati may look like an ordinary person but his awareness is completely absorbed in nowness. He has no need of books because he sees apparent phenomena and the whole of existence as the mandala of the guru. For him there is no speculation about the stages on the path. His actions are spontaneous and therefore benefit all sentient beings. When he leaves the physical body his consciousness becomes one with the dharmakaya, just as the air in a vase merges with the surrounding space when the vase is broken.

SONGS

The Song of Separation

I

The one who makes known the Buddha not imagined by
the mind,
The one who possesses the hidden teaching not shown
forth in books,
The one whose form is all wisdom, a true holder of the
vajra,
Gangshar Wangpo, whose kindness can never be repaid,
I can take refuge in no one but you.
Yet you remain always within me:
You are my refuge, then, until enlightenment.

Act according to the dharma, and transgress it;
Keep to the straight path, and fall into sin.
Since I never found anyone I could rely upon,
Sever me from the barbarous and the degenerate.

In the kingdom of no two things,
Who are the rulers and the servants?
And since that is the land I'm traveling to,
Sever me from servants and attendants.

The senses weave their nets to entrap
Those riches that are theirs already;
Since unattachment is the path I follow
Sever me from the treasurer of attachment.

The ownerless estate of meditation
Is built according to a perfect equanimity;
Since love and hate shall find no place therein,
Sever me from the monastery of possessiveness.

The yogin who lives only in the hour
Is the favored one of all kingdoms;
And since there is no need to reckon gifts and honor,
Sever me from the appearance of devotees.

Knowledge of being is the perfect teacher
And he is with me everywhere I go;
Since he it is I am relying on,
Sever me from those who speak for sect or party.

II

Ever present in the womb of joy
Remains the mandala of the five wisdoms;
And since that is the only thing that's real,
Sever me from the gods of mankind's making.

Samsara and nirvana do not stand opposed:
There's one that rituals will never reach;
Since I can overcome the mind's duplicity,
Sever me from the mind-made guardian deities.

The fatherland is with you everywhere,
Awareness will maintain its own defense;
Since there's no need to build up your self-centeredness,
Sever me from samsara's local gods.

Armed with the sword of faith in contemplation,
One stroke will free one's powers to realize all things;
Since this is the weapon that my teacher gave me,
Sever me from the hatred roused by patriotic war.

Nothing is dependable, nothing is fruitful;
The sun shines cheerfully, and yet
The darkness thickens and a reddening sky surrounds us.
What is there left that I can do?

I want to leave everything behind me,
Even if I'm ignorant of the dharma.
Even if you're ignorant of the dharma,
Chögyam, just you surrender everything.

My guide the hidden, joyful light of the teaching,
May the blank darkness round about me disappear.
Living the life of a young wandering mendicant,
May I guide the world to a world beyond itself.

The Valley of Mystery, Tibet, 1959

Song of the Golden Elephant

The eagle soars away into the sky
And yet he never plumbs the depths of space.
The four seasons give place to one another,
Yet never seem to have an end or a beginning.
When the one dry tree on the hill is blown down
By the timely wind, what can one do?

The whistling winter wind blows lightly
The white flowers of the snowflakes.
Remembering the mother herding yaks,
How can one ever forget the highland of Geje?

O pillar of the sky, high mountain peak,
Hills, where trees and grasses grow, surround you,
Yet you remain alone and still,
The cloud of peace wrapped round about your shoulders.
Remembering the fatherland

The white flag is fluttered by the song of sadness.
The beautiful form of Jomo Lhari mountain
Comes suddenly to mind
And only the liquid turquoise of the lake
Can comfort me.

The east side and the west side of the hill are seen together
And the white banner that is thereupon
Speaks of that thing far off yet close at hand.

A young and golden elephant I offer you.
Beware the baby elephant
Still in the jungle,
The lonely child who drinks the hot fresh milk.
When he presents you with a crystal mirror
Make out the golden syllables
Written on my heart.

Read this by the light of the torch that dispels darkness.

Two cuckoos yesterday, by destiny
Were met together on a bush in South Tibet.
They sang so beautifully the huntsmen there
Forgot their arrows, poisoned with black hatred.

The learned men, interpreting,
Pull out all the commentaries
And eat their own flesh in secret.
Stupid and ignorant then, he weeps.
Do you not see him also
Shouting at stones?

The cranes went winging their way homeward
When the life of the thin one, the diseased one,
The life of the one with no strength in his wings
Was cut short by the sharp winter.
Do not blame god for this,
Calling him heartless.

Some fly in the sky and some sleep,
But none can cross time's circling street.
Horses gallop, have no destination.
An arrow also killed the cunning fox.

Fire engines guard the north, south, east, and west
But when the house of god itself begins to burn
The scorching of his hair ascends to heaven
And none can halt the raging wind of karma.

The rain clouds gather in the clear blue sky,
And suddenly I saw their glaring face
Red-eyed as a full moon in eclipse.

Who was it uttered these black incantations
And eighteen lightnings swarming, scorching hot
And all the valley a great wave of blood
And all the world's cry one tongue?

Cool off these fires, Avalokiteshvara.
Your smiling face is all compassion,
Your long, white, smooth, thin arm is stretched to save
And light glows in a peaceful ring around you.

Freed from the mind's habitual duplicity,
What need is there for wordless liberation?
Illumination breaks through everywhere,
The fires of suffering fade and disappear.
Come with me and wash off your leprosy,
Bathe in elixir from the crystal vase
And joining hands with me come on to liberation.

The Silent Song of Loneliness

I

The one to whom peace and solitude
Are known forever, perfectly,
You, Milarepa, Longchenpa,
The guru to whom all things are known,
The one who shows the single truth,
You I remember, I, your son.
Crying from an alien island.

The wild duck, companionless,
Cries out in desolate loneliness,
And flies alone, wings outspread,
Soaring in the boundless sky.

In the womb beyond the one and many
Yours is the inner loneliness,
And yours alone the emptiness
Within and everywhere around.
The mountainside alone creates
The clouds that change the rain, the two
That never go beyond the one,
So soar away, wild duck, alone.

Thunder resounding everywhere
Is only the elements at play,
The four expressing the sound of silence.
The hailstones triangular,
The black clouds and the storms blast,
Are earthbound only, wild duck,
So do not fall a prey to doubt
But get you gone upon your flight.

The waters of the sunset lie
Saffron-painted, beautiful,

And yet unchanging is the light
And dignity of the sun; so cut
The cord that joins the day and night,
And stretch your wings and fly, wild duck.

The moon's rays spread over the ocean
And heaven and earth smile: the cool
And gentle breeze moves over them,
But you are young and far from home,
Wild duck. So stretch your wings alone
And travel on the path to nowhere.

II

A sharpness is on the summer's tail;
The healing breeze of summer yields
To the bitter wind of wintertime.
If this was a signal to you, bird,
Then you would know the seasons not
Themselves, but as a turning wheel.

The young deer, wandering among
The summer green and pleasant ways,
Remembering his mother caught
And killed in a trap, can yet enjoy
The freedom of the empty valley
And find relief and rest of mind.

The lonely child who travels through
The fearful waste and desolate fields,
And listens to their barren tune,
Greets as an unknown and best friend
The terror in him, and he sings
In darkness all the sweetest songs.

The lonely bird lived all his days
In a place apart, yet did not know
Peace, or the dwelling place of peace.

But when the face of loneliness
Is known to you, then you will find
The Himalayan hermitage.

The jungle child sings his song
Sad and alone, yet weeps for nothing,
And joy is in him as he hears
The flute the peaceful wind is blowing.
And even so am I, in the sky
Dancing, riding the wild duck.

June 24, 1965

Song of the Dakini

I

I praise the Queen of Means who goes gathering riches,
The Queen of Wisdom who subdues the threefold world,
The dancer in the womb of all-pervading goodness,
I praise the one who overcomes and calms.

Peacemaker, who sends out the light of quietness,
Whose beaming smile lies behind the world,
Who gathers up the ocean of life's bounty
Into the womb of gladness, you I praise.

Creator of the light of dignity
And opener of the door of happiness,
The door of wisdom and of quality
And those four doors which open ever inward,

Passionate, ruddy-faced, you calmly dance;
You are the great enchantress of true love.
O let me praise you as the dakini
Whose passions are unfettered, unperturbed.

Wrathful and cruel, with red eyes glaring
You shatter the rigid barriers of the dark.
O let me praise you, whose miraculous anger
Is for the sufferer the way to joy.

I honored you, the only mother, yet
Uncertain and confused, I failed to set
You in your place in the eternal mantra.
Forgive me, grant me your transcendant power.

Your face is brighter than the sun and moon,
Your looks are of peaceful or of wrathful love,
But I was blinded by duality.
You are the Queen of Heaven; think on me.

II

The gestures of your hands showed me their meanings
And as you danced the bells rang at your belt;
I could not then truly interpret them—
Now, dakinis, come under my control.

Ever apparent, you do not exist,
Only a word utters you here with us.
Waistless, formless, goddess of the real,
Now we may make known the secret prophecy.

Unseen, you are the mother of the buddhas;
Yet seen, creation's power is your deceit.
As an arc of light in the middle path, conduct
The envoys of the body's force to freedom.

The cruel devils and the harmless gods
And the gray folk that hustle in between
Make up the array of these impulses.
Command the onslaught and commence attack!

Keep the path clear of those too youthful
And, whether as human being or as goddess,
Devil or vampire, dance entrancingly;
For each of us disperse the darkness of this age.

Among the buddhas you are a Vajrayogini,
In the land of Karma you are the great hostess,
On earth you bear a hundred thousand names,
Formless, you yet sum up the universe.

As mother of us, or as daughter,
Take us to where we realize the truth.

In the sea of my mind the words as waves have risen
In recollection of the Great Queen.
May the Ocean benefit
Those who sail beyond the great sea.

Fall 1965

POEMS

The Victoria Memorial

In the garden of lusts craving burgeons,
The darkness of sin lies thick on the crumbling field;
The flames of the age of darkness flare in the place of terror
And Chögyam only is left.

Drops of blood cover the bamboo leaf
And a terrible wind from the graveyard scatters the name of
 the dead.

The accents of the land echo even in heaven;
Now my world is only a name.

The wind howls in the dark wood
And the wheeling birds have nowhere to settle;
Whom can I tell, when the beautiful pine tree
Cracks with her cones and comes splintering down.

Death leers up from under the earth;
Remembering the love of the only beloved
I fall to the ground, and my cries fill every direction.

And O, the white child, and his mother with her bracelets
 of turquoise,
Appears in a moment, and "welcome, welcome" cries.
(Ask still the same question concerning the stain on the
 mirror.)

Here in this alien place the orphan stands naked,
Preparing to find and to found a new fatherland,
Licking the honey that flows from the glistening hives.

So fair, and yet not the moon,
So bright, and yet not the sun,
More perfectly set than the stars in the heaven,
I saw in her beauty the whole of the universe,
And you I took as a friend, with love.

If it is the moon in the sky—
quite enough to show your smiling gesture.
If it is the moon in your mind—
How then to show your smiling gesture?

I have no pride
in being a unicorn
if you consider this carefully
you might be able to
relax your struggle.

Even if he is the prince of a kingdom
trust him and ask him some questions.
Since he is a human being
You'll be able to get some answers.

If one recollects suffering
of arrow piercing into the heart
one should remember the beloved one
and compare the feelings.

If you have a sharp sword
learn to cut off the life of your enemy
If you have doubt in your mind
who's going to cut that uncertainty?

Whatever comes out of the mind,
regard not that as poetry.
When the true poetry comes,
no such question exists.

Yesterday I returned from the battlefield
Since then I'm able to rest

Please do not hope that today
I'll be able to defeat more enemies.

The moon rises, the sun has set
planets rotate in their orbit
Yet the heavens will not change
This we discover in each other.
Do not hope for too much—
results might bring painful disappointment
If you remain without any doubts
That is the wish-fulfilling gem.

I have no name
but others call me "the nameless one."

How can one escape imprisonment
and burst the chains of concept?

1969

In the wilds of the Deer Park in Sarnath
There are the monasteries and shrines, relics of Buddhism.
A stray dog finds a wounded deer lying in a shed
And licks it in an attempt to try and heal the wound,
But the interior damage is impossible to reach with this
automatic act of the tongue.

Look! Look! There is a burning heart;
The flames like sunset or an eclipse of the sun,
The dark red of the end of an eclipse.
Some kind-hearted person runs to the nearest telephone
But there is no rescue, no doctor who can extinguish this
fire without body,
Though it is courageous at least to try to hold on to the
heart.
Yet it is deeply sad that he had to let it go this far.

What is compassion? What is love?
When the lover and the love become one in the simplicity
of the present.

Still pain and pleasure lie in the midst of a bundle of steel wool
And light and dark live in the midst of lamentation.
Who helps—because the savior and the victim both need help.

The dog patiently tries to heal the wound of the deer of Sarnath.
The burning sun dries up not only the trees, plants, and streams, but a whole continent.

Who will make the rain?
Who will invoke the clouds?
Where is the formless form of compassion,
The compassion of Avalokiteshvara?

March 12, 1969

Who is lost?
And who lost?
In any case, never discovered;
But there remains complete devotion.
It seemed not necessary to find where one should attach oneself as object of devotion.

In the highland where the wild animals patiently graze
On grass which is dry,
Merely waiting for the fresh greenness to grow.
Biting cold wind which is more than memory,
With a heartless, cutting snowstorm.
Wild geese sing in the distance,
Aimlessly, the fox and jackals run about.
A hardened traveler on horseback rides across the horizon.
Beautiful things, all these.
Yet impenetratingly desolate.
It is almost hard to see the inspiration to enjoy the scene.
But someone noticed these,
Even to the movement of tiny grasses blown by the cold wind.

Completely intoxicated by you,
This longing for Padma Tri-me.
There is nothing to conceal,
Yet hardly anything to expose
For my faith and devotion is beyond word or melody of music.
A kind that no one would be able to hear or understand.

It is beautiful to grow with this loneliness,
Since it is your aloneness which inspires and drives me into selfless action.
The echo of your voice is heard.
The expression of your face is seen.
But when I become acquainted with these,
There is no more longing,
But the infinite compassion is inherited by your son.
You thrust upon me this weight.
I know it will remain as burden
Until I see your face in me,
And hear your voice from everywhere.

This is you Padma Tri-me:
Ornamented with yogi costumes,
Dancing on a cloud,
Singing in the language of dakinis—
You are the fire and water,
You act as the earth and the space
Which accommodate the infinite.

March 28, 1969

So much for love.
In the state of meditation and openness
There comes duhkha;
Suffering is the nature of
Samsara.

The old traveler,
Stumbling with his stick's support
Makes the journey of pilgrimage.

Each step is not perfect.
Walking on the desert sand,
His foot slips as he walks.
Slow and long
On the arduous journey
He hears the sound of the
Grains of sand
Yet firmly plants his steps
In the sand
As his support.

Of course, I know—
Of course, it is shown to me—
Of course, there's no doubt—
The play of dakinis
Is always there.

In love
I feel both pain and pleasure
Which is quite clearly seen
In the nature of dakinis.
Sometimes it is tedious,
Tedious because you're hopeful,
Hopeful for something to happen.
Sometimes it is creative
And your heart is open
To creativity.
These two manifestations
Are clearly seen
Alternatively,
Pain and pleasure alike.
It is what is.
That is what I have found.
In pain there's no sickness
Because pain is aroused
By creative forces.
Thanks to dakinis.
The same goes for pleasure,

The same goes for love.
Love is something profound
Something deeper—
In fact it's the flow
Of the universe.
Without love nothing is created.

I'm lying in bed as a patient.
Beside me is the quadrapod
Which helps me to walk.
There are so many friends
Who are longing to give
Their own health for my recovery.
Still it is the play of love.
Here I see that love
Consists of both pleasure and pain.
Love is the expression or gesture
Of apparent phenomena.
It is painful as though someone
Controlled the beat of my heart,
As though someone had stolen my heart.
But underneath lies inspiration.
So I discover
That she who has stolen my heart
Is the true Shakti
Who removes all possessiveness.
People can die for love
Quite involuntarily.
People have such courage in love.
Pain and pleasure are one in love.
For it includes negative thoughts,
Possessiveness,
Impermanence.
This love and the nature of love
Can never be changed
By anyone.
It is the dance of the dakinis.
It is the dance of the Kagyü lineage.

As historically Gampopa,
Living in a monastery,
The father of the Kagyü school,
Let loose his three precious
Chief disciples,
Let them dance and
Compose music
In the state of ecstasy.

I've said so much
In this poem.
But a poet's mind
Can never stop composing.
He identifies himself with the play of dakinis
Or that of Sarasvati.
This poem is the discovery
Of love in courage and freedom
Glory be to the subject—
Poetry.

Newcastle General Hospital
Spring 1969

The Perfect Love Poem

There is a beautiful snow-peaked mountain
With peaceful clouds wrapped round her shoulders.
The surrounding air is filled with love and peace.
What is going to be is what is,
That is love.

There is no fear of leaping into the immeasurable space of
love.
Fall in love?
Or, are you in love?
Such questions cannot be answered,
Because in this peace of an all-pervading presence,

No one is in and no one is falling in.
No one is possessed by another.

I see a beautiful playground
Which some may call heaven,
Others may regard it as a trap of hell.
But, I, Chögyam, don't care.

In the playground beautiful dakinis are holding hand drums,
    flutes, and bells.
Some of them, who are dancing, hold naked flames, water,
    a nightingale,
Or the whole globe of earth with the galaxies around it.
These dakinis may perform their dance of death or birth or
    sickness,
I am still completely intoxicated, in love.
And with this love, I watch them circle.
This performance is all-pervading and universal,
So the sonorous sound of mantra is heard
As a beautiful song from the dakinis.
Among them, there is one dakini with a single eye,
And turquoise hair blown gently by the wind.
She sends a song of love and the song goes like this:
    HUM HUM HUM
    If there is no joy of mahamudra in the form,
    If there is no joy of mahamudra in the speech,
    If there is no joy of mahamudra in the mind,
    How would you understand
    That we dakinis are the mother, sister, maid, and wife.
And she shouts with such penetrating voice, saying
    Come, come, come
    HUM HUM HUM
    Join the EH and VAM circle.

Then I knew I must surrender to the dance
And join the circle of dakinis.
Like the confluence of two rivers,
EH the feminine and VAM the male,
Meeting in the circle of the dance.

Unexpectedly, as I opened myself to love, I was accepted.
So there is no questioning, no hesitation,
I am completely immersed in the all-powerful, the joyous
dakini mandala.
And here I found unwavering conviction that love is
universal.
Five chakras of one's body filled with love,
Love without question, love without possessions.

This loving is the pattern of mahamudra, universal love.
So I dance with the eighty siddhas and two thousand aspects
of dakinis,
And I will dance bearing the burden of the cross.
No one has forsaken me.
It is such a joyous love dance, my partner and I united.

So the clear, peaceful mountain air,
Gently blows the clouds,
A beautiful silk scarf wrapped round.
The Himalayas with their high snow peaks are dancing,
Joining my rhythm in the dance,
Joining with the stillness, the most dignified movement of
them all.

August 6, 1969

Life Was as it WAS

moon

me

rock

rock grasssssssssssssssss windgrass

rock

but it's cold cooooooooooooooooooooool ling

and rockieeeeesssssssssssssssssssssss but waterrrrrrrrrrrr



Past and present.

If you are a king of an empty field
There is no need for a queen.
If you are a madman in desolate mountains
There is no need for a city.

When I met you yesterday
You wore red clothes
When I talked to you today,
You would be better unmasked.

I was born naked.
My beloved parents
Kindly gave me a name.
When I reached twenty
I thought "a name is a chain,
I want to abandon it."
Whoever I question
No one answers me.
When I hear the wind in the pines
I get an answer.

August 9, 1969

Early Outward

Get up today!
The sun is shining brightly.
Listen—you are the essence of my heart;
the goodness of life.
I invite you—Get up today.

Today's gone very quickly—
tomorrow will come.
Please do not give up your hope
that we will have time to taste
happiness and
sorrow.

If you are the moon in heaven
show me your face as full moon.
If this is the season of summer
show me the rhododendron flowers.

On the mirror of the mind
many reflections could have occurred.
However, the face of the beloved one
cannot be changed.

If the heart has any pattern,
there can be no change.
Will the sun rise tomorrow?
—It is useless to ask such silly questions.

Whether the sun arises or not,
I don't make any distinctions.
My care is only for you—
that in your heart the genuine sun should rise.

If she is my dearly beloved one
she should be called "One who has stolen my heart."
The dance of apparent phenomena—mirage.
Is this performed by you?

When I meditate in the cave
rock becomes transparent.
When I met the right consort
my thought became transparent:
Dearly beloved,
    to whom my karma is linked,
    I could not find anyone but you.
    The wind of karma is a force
    beyond my control.
This good aspiration and karma
is impossible to change.
Turbulence, waterfall of Kong Me—
no one can prevent it.

When my mind recalls the dearly beloved
there is no shyness or fear;
majestic dakini as you are—
this must be my good karma.

1969

I have no hope or expectation
yet a wish has been fulfilled,
just like snowflakes in winter
form into eight-petaled flowers.

You are the Queen.
You produce
Famine, war, disease
And also happiness.
I salute you.

The Queen must be subdued
As she has been in the past.

I see you peering through the clouds
With your single eye.
You pretend to hide your name
But I know your name is
Ekajati.

Come, accept my feast offering.
Take part in the dance along with the other dakinis.
Whether you manifest yourself
As harmful demon
Or protectress
You have but one form all the time.

Why, why do you have to show such reaction?
I know because you are a red bitch
Who clings to one thing.

Do you remember the message of Padmasambhava?
At that very moment he put his vajra on your head,
He plunged you in the boiling lake
And showed your true form,
A naked skeleton.

I am the descendant of Padmakara
As you very well know.
Time has very little to do with it.

Don't please confuse in the wire wool,
Don't please confuse in this passionate flame.
Remember your vow.
In the end,
You and I become one,
Yet that is no threat for your existence.

Come, come Ekajati.
Bow to me,
Bow to my wisdom.

November 2, 1969

You disguise in the darkness
You disguise in the brilliance of sunlight.
Your single eye appears
As the sun's eclipse.
You bring along with you
All your retinue;
The harmful demons
The seductive girl.
Some ride on reindeers
Holding their vajra scepters
Heart and corpse.
Some ride on garudas.
Some ride on swans
Making a rain of flowers.

You carry sacks of poison
That could destroy the whole universe
You also carry the crystal container of medicine
Elixir that could cure
The sickness of all human beings.
You appear as harmful demon
And protectress.

I, Chögyam, am not afraid
Whatever form you take
For I have seen you in every possible form.

Take my offerings.
Obey my commands.
As Padmakara subdued you
On the pass of Mount Hepo
In Samye.

I am the descendant of Padmakara;
It is not your wish that counts.
It is time for you to submit
And fulfill the desires of my work
As you did in Samye.

I know your origin,
Born out of an iron boil.
I know your mischievous actions.
I have your sacred heart mantra
And your words of promise
In the presence of Padmakara.
Be my sister
Or mother or maid.
Do not interrupt me any more
This is the command
Of Vidyadhara.

Understand Dakinis
As the universal force;

That is to understand
The true force within your mind.
It is unborn, unoriginated.
Understand this.

November 3, 1969

Looking into the world
I see alone a chrysanthemum,
Lonely loneliness,
And death approaches.
Abandoned by guru and friend,
I stand like the lonely juniper
Which grows among rocks,
Hardened and tough.
Loneliness is my habit—
I grew up in loneliness.
Like a rhinoceros
Loneliness is my companion—
I converse with myself.
Yet sometimes also,
Lonely moon,
Sad and happy
Come together.

Do not trust.
If you trust you are in
Others' hands.
It is like the single yak
That defeats the wolves.
Herds panic and in trying to flee
Are attacked.
Remaining in solitude
You can never be defeated.
So do not trust,
For trust is surrendering oneself.
Never, never trust.

But be friendly.
By being friendly toward others
You increase your nontrusting.
The idea is to be independent,
Not involved,
Not glued, one might say, to others.
Thus one becomes ever more
Compassionate and friendly.
Whatever happens, stand on your own feet
And memorize this incantation:
Do not trust.

November 25, 1969

Red glaring from the West
Sound of raindrops—
Such a peculiar climate
And a rainbow too.
Freedom,
Freedom from limitations,
Freedom from the square
(Exact patterns all carefully worked out),
Freedom from mathematical psychology
And logic.
The banner of true and free
Flies in the air of the middle way.
It is somehow wholesome,
Healthy as the energetic tiger
Or lion.
Growl,
GROWL—
Beautiful pointed teeth
Demonstrating invincibility.
I, Chögyam, watch all this
From the top of a pine tree
Bending in the wind
Quite nonchalantly.

December 16, 1969

Three-bladed missile
Piercing to the sky—
Vroom,
Bang, Bang!
It leaves the ground.
It is the manifestation of hatred
For the whole earth,
Hatred for this whole solar system.
Who is the victim?
Who is the victor?
It is highly ironical
While others live on
Such luxury.
There must be some force of
Truth and justice—
These very words have been overused.
Yet with the force of the true powerful nature
There will be the perfect situation
Which is unorganized,
Inspired by the pupil who is not conditioned.
So the world is not
All that pitch black—
There is some harmony
And in this harmony we live.
We have been inspired
Yet are neither anarchists
Nor revolutionaries
In the blind sense.
Love to you all.

December 17, 1969

THE WAY OF THE BUDDHA

Walking the hidden path of the wish-fulfilling gem
Leading to the realm of the heavenly tree, the changeless.
Untie the tongues of mutes.
Stop the stream of samsara, of belief in an ego.
Recognize your very nature as a mother knows her child.

This is transcendent awareness cognizant of itself,
Beyond the path of speech, the object of no thought.
I, Tilopa, have nothing at which to point.
Knowing this as pointing in itself to itself.

Do not imagine, think, deliberate,
Meditate, act, but be at rest.
With an object do not be concerned.
Spirituality, self-existing, radiant,
In which there is no memory to upset you
Cannot be called a thing.

TILOPA
(Translated by Herbert V. Guenther
in *The Life and Teaching of Naropa*)

The Way of the Buddha

The path of spiritual development in the Buddhist tradition is described in terms of yanas or vehicles. At each stage along the path, particular methods are employed to take the meditator or yogi to the next stage. In this chapter we briefly describe all nine stages of psychological development and the appropriate vehicles for traveling through them in the

hope that some insight into the subtlety and depth, as well as the logic of the experiences involved, will inspire people to enter or persevere on the path. We hope this description will also serve as a caution for those who are overly ambitious or complacent. It should be clear to all who read it that a competent guide is needed since the tendency toward self-deception becomes increasingly dangerous as one progresses on the path.

All the Buddhist traditions in Tibet contain the threefold yanas (of which there are nine subdivisions): the hinayana, or "lesser vehicle," containing the shravakayana and the pratyekabuddhayana; the mahayana, or "greater vehicle," which is also known as the bodhisattvayana; and the six yanas of the vajrayana—kriya, upa, yoga, mahayoga, anu, and ati.

No one can embark upon the path without the preparation of the hinayana, without developing the evolutionary tendencies, the readiness for the path. In this sense the teachings could be said to be secret, for, if a person is not ready for the teachings, he won't be able to hear them. Thus, they are self-secret.

The first recognition of the dharma begins with the shravakayana—that is to say, listening to and hearing the teachings of the four noble truths. The student hears the self-evident problems of life, the evidence for the existence of suffering, and is inspired to look further to find the origin of pain. He is inspired to search out a master who can show him the path toward seeing pain as it is, its origin, and the understanding of suffering as the path. The student might master the application of the eightfold path and so on and come to the pratyekabuddhayana, the second part of the hinayana.

In the pratyekabuddhayana one works backward, using the intellect, from death to ignorance, and so comes to the conclusion of confusion. However, there is still a tendency toward isolation in that the student is still involved with his own world, his own experience of confusion or its absence. And so it follows that the meditation practice in this yana is purely centralized on the simplicity of nowness. The student is constantly disciplining himself to stay in the now. This is true of the shamatha practice of exclusive awareness as well as of the vipashyana practice of panoramic awareness.

Then, as the experience of vipashyana grows, one approaches the third yana, the bodhisattvayana where the individual's self-conscious

search is surrendered to the selflessness of the bodhisattva ideal. Here the work lies in the acts of compassion of the bodhisattva, compassion being the act of radiation of intense warmth, radiation without a radiator. This is, quite simply, the application of the six paramitas of the bodhisattva, the action of the nirmanakaya buddha.

From this action one develops the transcendental knowledge of egolessness. Here the karmic chain reactions dealt with in the previous yana are absent. The twofold veil of conflicting emotions and primitive beliefs about reality is rent—which is the same as saying that one no longer believes in the existence of an individual "I" and that the conceptualizations which this "I" laid on the real world no longer exist. This discovery—of the absence of duality and conceptualization—is called *shunyata,* or nothingness. Having removed the wall between *this* and *that,* the vision of *that* is clear and precise.

But, after all, the experience of shunyata, at this point, cannot be said to be nothing, because there is still some self-consciousness connected with the experience—in that the absence of duality is so vivid. So that the tenth stage of the bodhisattva path is where one experiences the "death" of shunyata and the "birth" into luminosity. Shunyata as an experience falls away and the bodhisattva sees, not only the absence of the barrier, but he sees further into the luminous quality of *that* which is known as the luminosity of prabhasvara of the bodhisattva experience.

But even the notion of that experience is a hang-up, and the powerful weapon of the vajralike samadhi is necessary to bring the bodhisattva into the state of being wise rather than knowing wisdom as an external discovery. That is the moment of bodhi, or wakefulness. Having that knowing wisdom as something external, the first discovery is that of the energies clearly seen—the mandala spectrum. Thus the experience of the vajralike samadhi is the death of the luminosity as an external experience and the birth into the sambhogakaya, the entrance into the vajrayana.

Here colors speak through, as do shapes and movements, until the point is reached where there is no room for a speck of dirt. The perception of the energies for the first time is so intense and overwhelming that one is tremendously impressed by their purity. Here you regard yourself as a servant, for the very reason that you are overwhelmed by the purity of the universe. So you employ thousands of ways of communicating to the universe in terms of bodily purity, mantras, and mudras.

The perception of reality as energies is tantra, and the basic notion of

the tantric attitude toward the universal energies is to see them in terms of the dakini principle. That is to say, the dakinis represent the creative-destructive patterns of life. In the kriyayana one is overwhelmed by the brilliant purity of the energies. The falling away of this experience of purity is the entrance into the next yana, the upayana.

The upayana could be said to be a transitional yana in that, in terms of application, it is dependent on both the kriya- and yogayanas. Instead of seeing a pure universe, one becomes aware of the creative-destructive aspects of the energies. This is the meditation of the yogayana, while one still applies the yogic practices of the kriya. Here one begins to produce the tantric notion of intellect. This is to say that here one realizes the miraculous quality of the birth of the energies, and so begins to look forward, inferring that there are more miracles to come. Such intellectuality on the vajra scale automatically brings the obstacles of a longing for a higher goal such as the "eight great miracles," and so on. But no obstacle can stand in the way here, for the tantric knowledge of the kriya- and upayanas is based on the awakened state of mind of mahamudra. *Mahamudra* means the Great Symbol, symbol, or spectacle—vision, in terms of seeing the universe on its absolute level. This perception is so intense that all clingings and longings are only temporary. Since such a thing as this absolute could and does exist in terms of the relativity of the striving toward it, the application of these tantric methods could be described in terms of a river running toward the south—it proves that there is a mighty ocean ahead.

Next is the yogayana. Here the perception of the dakini principle is so precise that the universe is seen in terms of the threefold mandala—the external situation, the physical body, and the state of consciousness. All these elements are equally part of *that*. In this yoga one achieves the four mudras: Whatever you see is the mirrorlike wisdom, whatever you hear is discriminating wisdom, whatever you feel is the wisdom of equanimity, whatever you perceive is the wisdom of automatic fulfillment. This spontaneous fourfold wisdom diffuses the boundary between center and fringe of the mandala; thus, there is less distinctive evaluation of the mandala. Here the mahamudra experience begins to develop toward maha ati. This is the entrance into the dharmakaya.

Here the mahayogayana begins with the union of great joy, *mahasukha*. Such a breakthrough of devaluation of center and projection brings comfort so that the vajra intellect of the yogayana ceases to be a

strain. This brings the joy of the union and the ati quality of openness, so that whatever is perceived is the expression of the eightfold primeval mandala, which need not be sought from the point of view of the kriyayana. Having seen that open space, as has been said, when the dawn of Vajrasattva breaks, there is a complete view of the eight sacred mandalas of the eight herukas. The perception of mandala dissolves into complete devaluation of what is. This is the entrance into anuyoga.

With the breakthrough of the physical nadis and chakras one begins to see the union of space and wisdom: that is, the nonsubstantial quality of the wisdom and the nonsubstantial quality of the perceiver. Even the notion of union dissolves and one begins to develop the vajra pride that you are the heruka; that acknowledging self as heruka is irrelevant. One begins to realize the two experiences of unborn and unoriginated, which leads to the next experience of maha ati.

The sharpness of insight and the notion of being wise are united. At this point the iconographic perception of the herukas and dakinis is self-liberated. Even the pulsating quality of the energy is diffused into what is known as the vajra chain. In other words, the notion of freedom itself has been freed so that the true perception of dharmakaya is seen as extremely realistic, so much so that any question has been answered.

This is the end of the journey which need never have been made. This is the seamless web of what is.

OX HERDING

The Ox-Herding Pictures

I have decided to include the ten ox-herding pictures, a well-known Zen representation of the training of the mind, so basic that it could be considered fundamental to all schools of Buddhism. A deeper way of looking at it is in terms of spiritual development from shravakayana to maha ati. In the Tibetan tradition there is an analogy of elephant herding but it refers largely only to the practice of shamatha. The symbolism does not go beyond the riding of the elephant. In the ox-herding pictures the evolutionary process of taming the bull is very close to the vajrayana view of the transmutation of energy. Particularly returning to the world as the expression of the compassion of the nirmanakaya shows that the final realization of Zen automatically leads to the wisdom of maha ati.



一尋牛

1. The Search for the Bull

The inspiration for this first step, which is searching for the bull, is feeling that things are not wholesome, something is lacking. That feeling of loss produces pain. You are looking for whatever it is that will make the situation right. You discover that ego's attempt to create an ideal environment is unsatisfactory.



二
見跡

2. Discovering the Footprints

By understanding the origin you find the possibility of transcending this pain. This is the perception of the four noble truths. You see that the pain results from the conflicts created by ego and discover the footprints of the bull, which are the heavy marks of ego in all play of events. You are inspired by unmistakable and logical conclusions rather than by blind faith. This corresponds to the shravakayana and pratyekabuddhayana paths.



三

見牛

3. Perceiving the Bull

You are startled at perceiving the bull and then, because there is no longer any mystery, you wonder if it is really there; you perceive its insubstantial quality. You lose the notion of subjective criteria. When you begin to accept this perception of nonduality, you relax, because you no longer have to defend the existence of your ego. Then you can afford to be open and generous. You begin to see another way of dealing with your projections and that is joy in itself, the first spiritual level of the attainment of the bodhisattva.



四 得牛

4. Catching the Bull

Seeing a glimpse of the bull, you find that generosity and discipline are not enough in dealing with your projections, because you have yet to completely transcend aggression. You have to acknowledge the precision of skillful means and the simplicity of seeing things as they are, as connected to fully developed compassion. The subjugation of aggression cannot be exercised in a dualistic framework—complete commitment into the compassionate path of the bodhisattva is required, which is the further development of patience and energy.



五 牧牛

5. Taming the Bull

Once caught, the taming of the bull is achieved by the precision of meditative panoramic awareness and the sharp whip of transcendental knowledge. The bodhisattva has accomplished the transcendent acts (paramitas)—not dwelling on anything.



六 騎牛歸家

6. Riding the Bull Home

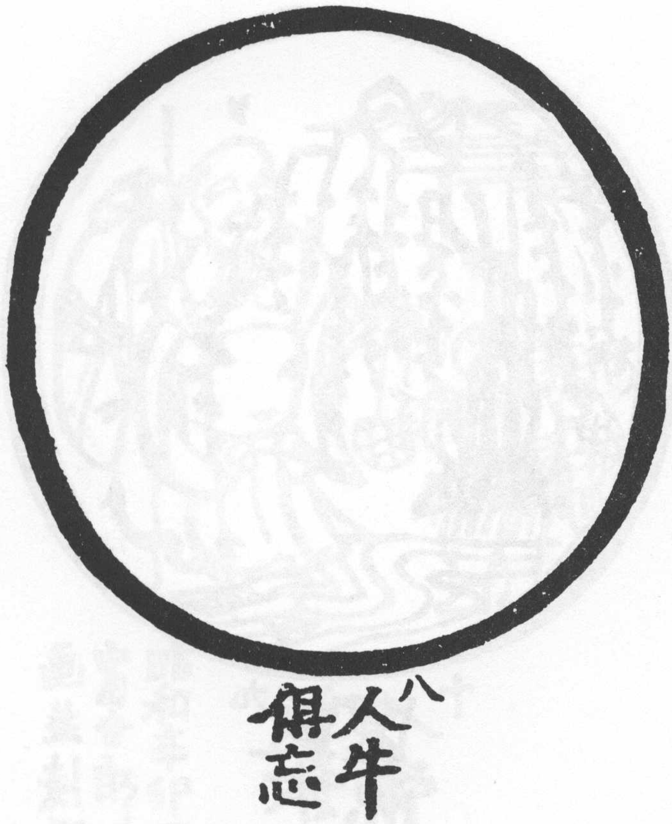
There is no longer any question of search. The bull (mind) finally obeys the master and becomes creative activity. This is the breakthrough to the state of enlightenment—the vajralike samadhi of the eleventh bhumi. With the unfolding of the experience of mahamudra, the luminosity and color of the mandala become the music which leads the bull home.



七
忘牛存人

7. The Bull Transcended

Even that joy and color become irrelevant. The mahamudra mandala of symbols and energies dissolves into maha ati through the total absence of the idea of experience. There is no more bull. The crazy wisdom has become more and more apparent, and you totally abandon the ambition to manipulate.



8. Both Bull and Self Transcended

This is the absence of both striving and nonstriving. It is the naked image of the primordial buddha principle. This entrance into the dharmakaya is the perfection of nonwatching—there is no more criteria and the understanding of maha ati as the last stage is completely transcended.



9. Reaching the Source

Since there is already such space and openness and the total absence of fear, the play of the wisdoms is a natural process. The source of energy which need not be sought is there; it is that you are rich rather than being enriched by something else. Because there is basic warmth as well as basic space, the buddha activity of compassion is alive and so all communication is creative. It is the source in the sense of being an inexhaustible treasury of buddha activity. This is, then, the sambhogakaya.



10. In the World

Nirmanakaya is the fully awakened state of being in the world. Its action is like the moon reflecting in a hundred bowls of water. The moon has no desire to reflect, but that is its nature. This state is dealing with the earth with ultimate simplicity, transcending following the example of anyone. It is the state of "total flop" or "old dog." You destroy whatever needs to be destroyed, you subdue whatever needs to be subdued, and you care for whatever needs your care.

SELECTED WRITINGS

*Om Mani Padme Hum Hrih**

THIS MANTRA OF seven syllables was, according to Tibetan Buddhist tradition, given to us by Gautama Buddha in his lifetime and is incorporated in many sutras or sermons of the Buddha. It is the mantra of Avalokiteshvara (Chenrezik, in Tibetan). Avalokiteshvara is a manifestation of the Buddha in the sambhogakaya or celestial sphere (the body of bliss). He is a maha-bodhisattva, having reached the heights of buddhahood, but out of compassion for the sufferings of the world, shows himself as a bodhisattva.

In the teachings of the *Perfection of Wisdom* (*prajnaparamita* literature), known as the second turning of the wheel of the dharma, and in the third (and last) Dharma-Chakra Collection, Avalokiteshvara is shown as asking questions of the Buddha on behalf of all men, since men find difficulty in asking questions directly and often do not know what to ask.

We call Avalokiteshvara the embodiment of the compassion of all the buddhas. This, his mantra, is therefore itself the essence of the Buddha's compassion for all sentient beings.

Countless ages ago, a thousand boys vowed to become buddhas, and each one offered up a different resolution. One resolved to become the Gautama Buddha in a certain century; Avalokiteshvara resolved not to become enlightened until all the thousand boys became buddhas. He vowed to be a helper to all those wishing to become buddhas, asking questions for them, and teaching them.

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*The famous mantra of Avalokiteshvara, OM MANI PADME HUM, is popularly referred to as "the six-syllable mantra." The version of this mantra described by Chögyam Trungpa in this article has an additional syllable HRIH at the end of the mantra. He refers to it as the

Out of his great pity for the sufferings of beings in the six directions—the deva world, or world of the gods; the asura (Titan) world; the human world; the animal world; the world of pretas (tantalized ghosts); and the hells—he made special journeys to the hells, to save all those suffering there from their agonies.

He again prayed before the buddhas of the ten directions, "May I help all beings and if I get tired in this great work, may my body be shattered into a thousand pieces." After that, he went first to the lower hells, climbing gradually through the ghost worlds up to the world of the gods. From there he looked down again and saw that although he had saved so many people from hell, thousands more were pouring in. This upset him, and at that moment his body flew into a thousand pieces like a pomegranate fruit. Then he shouted to all the buddhas, who came to his aid like snowflakes falling.

The buddhas with their beneficient influence made him whole again, and thereafter he had a thousand arms and nine heads. Then Amitabha Buddha gave a special head with his blessing of high wisdom. Vajrapani Bodhisattva gave him a head symbolizing the special powers of all the buddhas. In this form therefore Avalokiteshvara (Chenrezik) became more powerful than before, but he still continued to cry and lament when he saw the suffering of saṁsara, and he again repeated his vow before the buddhas, "May I not be enlightened before all beings reach enlightenment."

That is why we depict Avalokiteshvara with a thousand arms and eleven heads. From the tear which fell from his eye, the goddess bodhisattva Drölma was born. She is sometimes called Tara (her Sanskrit name). Her name means "She who ferries us across (the ocean of samsara)."

In front of Avalokiteshvara, Drölma took the vow, "I will be your sister and I will help you to bring all beings to enlightenment."

It is written in the mahayana sutras that Avalokiteshvara gave his mantra "OM MANI PADME HUM HRIH" to the Buddha, and the Buddha gave him the special task of helping all beings toward buddhahood. At this time the devas rained flowers on them, there was a tremor in the earth, and even the air reverberated with the sounds OM-MA-NI-PAD-ME-HUM-HRIH.

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mantra of seven syllables. The Tibetan sources from which Trungpa Rinpoche took this teaching and the alternate version of the mantra are not known.—Ed.

At this time the Buddha himself said that Avalokiteshvara/Chenrezik was the embodiment of the compassion of all the buddhas, the mahabodhisattva. Whoever recites this mantra will become enlightened, and meanwhile will enjoy health and prosperity and will be in the special care of Avalokiteshvara. Even if you feed all the buddhas for one hundred years, there is more punya for you in the recital of this mantra even once.

In a mantra, the power does not lie only in the words, but in the deeper spiritual meaning. If you meditate on shunyata, you reach buddhahood—not by wishing for it, but naturally, as evil thoughts stop. Evil thoughts are collected by our ego-thought, but the deeper experiences like shunyata arise by themselves. Mantra power does not come from reciting syllables, but arises naturally from inner meaning. All mantras have their outer meaning and their inner meaning.

The OM MANI PADME HUM means:

OM—the auspicious beginning (a "germ" syllable)
MANI—the jewel
PADME—the lotus
HUM—receiving the power, holding (a "germ" syllable)

As for HRIH, this is a sonorous symbol of the reality underlying all appearances; appearances veil or else reveal it according to how they are viewed. HRIH provides a key to unlock this truth.

At a relatively external level, the above mantra may be translated as "Hail to the jewel in the lotus, so be it, HRIH." In fact, the words carry a plurality of meanings corresponding to different levels of awareness.

The deeper and inner meaning of *mantra* is wider than the mere sounds. In the broader consciousness all sounds are the voice of Avalokiteshvara, and by implication, all sounds are therefore mantras. Repeating a mantra is therefore symbolic of this wider wisdom. Proper recitation of the mantra means, therefore, not only thinking of the meaning of the separate syllables, but also of this wider interpretation.

It is customary in Tibet to repeat a mantra all day, while working or relaxing, trying not to forget it for a single second. For a beginner it is sufficient to say it one hundred times daily; it is easier to count on a mala or rosary (108 beads).

Faith is of great importance: If you recite the mantra in this way,

Avalokiteshvara is not something outside yourself to which you pray—he is your compassion and part of you. This compassion is also the compassion of the Buddha.

Perfect concentration is also important. The compassion that grows within you embraces friend and enemy alike. It will lead you to nirvana; it is the water that brings to fruit the good seeds of karma within you.

Avalokiteshvara is like the moon
Whose cool light
Extinguishes the burning fires of samsara.
In its rays the night-flowering lotus of compassion
Will open its petals.

The Relationship of OM MANI PADME HUM to Overcoming Obstacles and Attaining the Wisdom of the Five Buddha Families

Syllable of the Mantra	*Paramitas (Perfections)*	*Skandhas (Aggregates) That Are Purified*	*Six Worlds Whose Suffering Is Destroyed*	*Colors, Directions, and Types of Buddha Wisdom*	*Buddha Families*	*Six Poisons to Wash Away*[1]	*Six Types of Gnosis (Yeshe) to Be Experienced*
OM	kshanti paramita, the perfection of patience	rupa (form)	deva world (world of gods)	white center Vairochana (He Who Illuminates)	tathagata ("thus come") family	pride (ngagyal)	dharmadhatu (realm of dharmas): wisdom of the essence (choying yeshe)
MA	virya paramita, the perfection of energy[2]	samskara (mental formations)[3]	asura world (world of titans)	green north Amoghasiddhi (Realizer of the Aim)[4]	karma (action) family	jealousy (tragdok)	task-accomplishing wisdom (chadrup yeshe)
NI	shila paramita, the perfection of good conduct or discipline	vedana (feeling)	manushya world (human world)	yellow south Ratnasambhava (Producer of the Jewel)	ratna (jewel) family	desire-attachment (döchak)	equalization or identity wisdom (nyamnyi yeshe)
PAD	prajna paramita, the perfection of wisdom	vijnana (consciousness)	tiryak world (animal world)	blue east Akshobhya (The Immovable)	vajra (adamantine) family	delusion (timuk)	wisdom (sherab/yeshe)
ME	dana paramita, the perfection of generosity	samjna (perceptions)	preta world (ghost world)	red west Amitabha (Infinite Light)	padma (lotus) family	avarice (serna)	detailed realization, discriminative wisdom (sortok yeshe)
HUM	dhyana[5] paramita, the perfection of mindfulness	the totality of the skandhas or the destroying of the skandhas	naraka[6] world (hell world)	black totality of buddhas	totality of buddha families	anger (shedang)	mirrorlike wisdom (melong yeshe)

[1]The correlation in this chart between the six poisons, the six types of gnosis, and the buddha families is quite unusual. However, there are a number of different systems that associate a particular buddha family with a particular obstacle or poison. The editor felt it was best not to change Chögyam Trungpa's chart in this regard.—Ed.

[2]In later years, Chögyam Trungpa generally translated *virya* as "exertion."—Ed.

[3]In later years, Chögyam Trungpa referred to samskaras as simply "formations," since some aspects of samskara, such as time, are not strictly speaking mental formations.—Ed.

[4]This is a translation of the Tibetan for *Amoghasiddhi,* which in Sanskrit means "he who accomplishes without fail."—Ed.

[5]The original version of this chart identified smriti as the paramita of mindfulness. We have changed it here to *dhyana* (meditation), the more commonly encountered term for this paramita.—Ed.

[6]In the original chart, the hell worlds were called "niraya world." We have changed the Pali word *niraya* to the Sanskrit *naraka* for consistency with the rest of the terminology in the table.—Ed.

Taking Refuge

On taking refuge, the first rule, which is general to all schools of Buddhism, is to know how to respect the triple gem and how to develop a proper sense of reverence.

In Tibet, at the same time as first learning to take refuge in Buddha, dharma, and sangha, Buddhists are also taught the following rules; even the ordinary householders teach their children that these rules are to be respected and obeyed at all times.

The first three rules are prohibitions:

Having taken refuge in the Buddha, do not seek refuge in gods who still dwell in the samsaric plane as they themselves are not free from attachment and suffering.

Having taken refuge in the dharma, do no harm to any beings, nor speak against other religions because these too contain some ethical codes.

Having taken refuge in the sangha, do not consort with people of bad behavior or worldly habits.

The next three rules contain positive instruction:

Taking refuge in the Buddha includes paying respect to the buddharupa or to any other holy image, also to any part of it, broken or otherwise. It should be handled respectfully and with due reverence and never be trodden on (even accidentally) or thoughtlessly picked up (especially not by the head).

In the same way, taking refuge in the dharma includes reverential treatment and respect of books. These should never be used thoughtlessly or as props for other articles. This respect for the scriptures extends to those of other faiths and languages.

Taking refuge in the sangha includes respect to all Buddhist priests not only for themselves but for what they represent. Also respect for one's teacher is considered very important.

Mahayana lays special emphasis on reverential behavior to the guru who is regarded as the representative of the Lord Buddha himself, and who gives personal guidance to his pupil.

This reverence and esteem for the guru goes even further, for in his buddha aspect he is accepted as the representative of the triple gem in its entirety. The *mind* of the guru is the mind of Buddha as he participates (1) in the realization of the buddha nature; (2) has perception of the buddha mind in the higher levels of meditation; (3) has experience of teaching and the distribution of knowledge combined with extreme compassion for his pupils' human weaknesses and failings; and (4) has accumulated this spiritual power for the benefit of all mankind.

The guru's *speech* is the dharma in that he has attained high levels in meditation and can convey this knowledge to his pupils, leading and guiding them to the truth. Spiritual power is also conveyed in his voice which has the capacity to dispel ignorance.

The guru's *body* is representative of the sangha in that it is the physical vehicle of the teaching.

The mahayana expands the Buddhist teaching of the triple gem by affirming that the buddhas are all comprised under the three kayas: the nirmanakaya ("divine body of incarnation"), sambhogakaya ("divine body of perfect endowment"), and dharmakaya ("divine body of truth"). The dharma is comprised of the three yanas—hinayana, mahayana, and vajrayana—while bhikshus and arhats; bodhisattvas and maha-bodhisattvas; yogins and vidyadharas constitute the three corresponding forms of the sangha.

Whichever form of Buddhism is followed, the observance of these rules is necessary for the development of a proper sense of reverence toward the triple gem. To disregard them can only result in harm to the individual, the building up of bad karma, and the deterioration and eventual loss of religious aptitude, while to follow them will result in greater perception and understanding.

Early Tibetan Buddhism

IN THIS TALK ON Tibetan Buddhism I want to give you a general outline of the teaching associated with the early history of Tibet.

Tibetan Buddhism has not been clearly presented outside Tibet, and there has been some misunderstanding, largely due to the complexity and richness of its outlook. Therefore, if we go through the historical developments we shall, I think, see the general pattern that the development of karma took in Tibet.

I am sure most of us know that nothing could be just by chance, just coincidence. There is always a meaning behind; whether it is a simple, mundane, small thing, such as happens in everyday life, or a general historical event in the world. The development of Buddhism in Tibet also took the pattern needed by each particular period in that country.

Most of you know that before Buddhism came to Tibet, the local religion was called Bön (or Pön), and this word *Bön* means "dharma." That is, dharma in the sense of the law, teaching. Particularly this Bön is the law of the universe in the study of the planets, and the change of things. There are two types of Bön, the root and the result, or the fruition of Bön and the origin of Bön. The fruition of Bön is very similar, one might say, to Chinese Taoism and Japanese Shintoism, and there is a profound philosophy of Bön which at the moment we do not know anything about at all. It is simply lost, including its study of nature and its wonderful practice of meditation techniques. Gradually the essence was lost, and then the root Bön, or popular Bön, became associated with the worship of local gods, and also with sacrificial ceremonies, astronomy, astrology, and other subjects, so that it became very popular and remained in Tibet till the seventh century.

Then came one of the first kings of Tibet called Lha Tho-tho-ri. The story tells that there was a vessel discovered one day on the roof of the palace. He opened this vessel and discovered a sutra, and also a mani mantra OM MANI PADME HUM carved on black jade. Nobody knew where it came from, and no one could read it. Obviously this shows that there was a Buddhist influence already in Tibet, possibly from Nepal. From then on interest in the Buddhist teaching developed. It was not that any particular Indian teachers came to Tibet and converted people, but rather that Tibetans had a general interest and wanted to know something about Buddhism. This interest continued until King Songtsan Gampo, who was one of the kings regarded as an incarnation of Avalokiteshvara. He was one of the great early philosophers of Tibet as well as a wonderful king. During his reign Sambhota of Thön came from India bringing a sacred image of Buddha made of white sandalwood from Ceylon, and he gave this as a gift to the king who then took the five precepts from this bhikkhu. He became the first Buddhist king of Tibet, and particularly he was moved by the teachings of the Buddha associated with nonviolence and compassion, because at that particular stage the Tibetans were rather aggressive.

The tradition of religion was then associated with the offering of sacrificial ceremonies, animals being one of the main things sacrificed. Also several main traditional ceremonies were associated with war. There was the offering of dralas, which means the offering to the warlords, and the whole idea of religion was involved with war, fighting, and killing; so that Songtsan Gampo was very moved by the simplicity and compassionate attitude of Buddhism. Therefore he took Avalokiteshvara as his pattern of a bodhisattva, he introduced the repetition of the OM MANI PADME HUM mantra throughout all Tibet, and he wrote twelve volumes of books known as *The Message of Songtsan Gampo,* largely associated with teachings of compassion. It appeared that he was not particularly prepared to change the general tradition of the country, already developed as Bön, but he just, without interfering, introduced a further interest in people's minds—just the repetition of the mani mantra. He also sent messengers who gave talks about Buddhism associated with compassion and nonviolence. Thus the seed of Buddhism developed in Tibet without forcing, without a conversion. In fact nobody bothered to translate all the scriptures nor attempted to establish any monasteries in Tibet until about seven generations later.

Then there was a Tibetan king called Trisong Detsen, who spent the early part of his life in the usual Bön tradition of conducting the wars and looking after his subjects. He thought a great deal and, by reading the writings of King Songtsan Gampo, he discovered this wonderful teaching of nonviolence and compassion. He felt that this must continue so he decided to establish Buddhism in Tibet. At this particular stage the ministers in power were somehow not sympathetic to Buddhism, therefore he had to find some excuse. To find a way to get people to agree to do this was a very difficult and tricky point. So he called a council of ministers and said that each king had left certain monuments in the country and he also would like to do the same. He told them he thought of two choices; either he would build a bronze pipe for the Brahmaputra, which flows through Tibet, or else he would build a small temple in or near the capital of Tibet. Obviously the ministers agreed that it would be easier to build a small Buddhist temple rather than a very expensive bronze pipe. Of course they did not guess what this involved. The king immediately trained 108 young Tibetan boys as scholars and they were sent to India to study Sanskrit. He also invited one of the Indian pandits called Shantarakshita, who was therefore the first Indian pandit to visit Tibet. He arrived in Tibet but found a great deal of hostility, psychic and physical and against him and the introduction of Buddhism to Tibet. Therefore he advised the king to invite Guru Padmasambhava from Nepal in order to purify and clear the hostile forces.

The geographical shape of Tibet is supposed to be like a demon lying on the ground with the psychic center of Lhasa in the center of the heart and Samye, with its various monasteries, in the center of the forehead. Guru Padmasambhava visited all such centers in Tibet and meditated and also, no doubt, preached to local people until conditions were right both on the psychic level and in the feelings of the people.

Shantarakshita then ordained seven young Tibetans as samaneras. Later on, several hundred more Tibetans were ordained. The monastery of Samye was established which was modeled on Nalanda, one of the monastic universities of the mahayana school of Buddhism in India. Within Samye there is a section for translating, a section for study, a section for meditation, and a section for administration. This great Buddhist institution is based on the same principle as Mount Meru in the center with four islands in the four quarters and a volcanic ring round outside forming a great wall with 108 small chötens around it. Guru Pad-

masambhava and other great Indian teachers designed it in such a way that the three yanas could develop; with a first introduction of the hinayana, with the 108 young Tibetans ordained in the Sarvastivadin order; then mahayana tradition of bodhisattva ordinations; and then vajrayana, or the study of Buddhist yoga where monks practiced meditation in the Yarlung cave of Samye. This retreat center was built as a model so that future monasteries in the Samye area could be ordered in a similar fashion.

In this way Tibet really became a Buddhist center, a Buddhist country; but still the local Bön priests wanted to maintain power as local leaders. The Tibetan Buddhist teachers accepted this, and providing they remained nonviolent and did not interfere with the development of Buddhism they could remain in Tibet, but, even so, one or two incidents occurred. There is a story from a historical account, *Padma Kathang,* where one particular day the Indian teachers happened to see a great sacrificial ceremony and they smelt the burning of meat from a long distance. As they approached this ceremony they saw the whole scene and from then onward the teachers decided that this was almost directly against Buddhist principles; therefore if this was the Bön teaching, then Buddhism and the Bön tradition could not remain together in one country. Owing to this the king then ruled that nobody was allowed to kill animals, but they were allowed to make images of animals and burn them.

On the whole, because the idea of nonviolence became so popular in Tibet, the country automatically developed toward Buddhism with no particular conversion and no persecution of Bön.

Two generations later a king who was very strongly influenced by the Bön tradition destroyed most of the monasteries in Tibet, with their images and precious scriptures. Fortunately many monks were able to hide in remote areas during this period, so, immediately after the assassination of the king, Buddhism was able to resume its continuity. At this particular stage the state had not organized any formal administration of Buddhism but then various individual provinces sent people to India to study under great Indian teachers and bring back translations from India.

Atisha Dipankara was one of the Indian pandits from Nalanda who was invited at this time. His teaching from India is known as the teaching of Kadam which is, one might say, the second development of Buddhism in Tibet. In the Kadam development, *ka* means "sacred word" and *dam*

means "all teaching" or "instruction," so that means that all the sacred teachings became orally practiced and the practice of all teachings was simplified into everyday practice.

In particular the bodhisattva way of life was practiced, where the main character of Kadam teaching is the practice of egolessness and changing of self. There is, for example, a certain particular meditation practice of dak shen nyamje. This Tibetan word means—*dak* is "I," "self"; *shen* is "others"; *nyamje* is "exchanging"—so that means changing one to others. This is the first particular practice of that kind of technique of learning by experience the actual teaching of anatta, selflessness. Here, at some stage, you discover, you realize, that only if you are prepared to overcome the resistance of "I," then you also become others, so there is no barrier and you are able to become one with others. This is the essential practice of the mahayana tradition. There are various stories about this that amount to practiced compassion, karuna method, where monks blessed sick people with infectious diseases and exchanged themselves with the others, so that the sick people were cured.

In the seven teachings of Kadam are such practices as "all faults are mine, all virtues are others," and other ways to overcome the resistance of self.

From this teaching developed another school called Chöd. This particular tradition is, I think, unknown in India but only developed in Tibet, and this Chöd is associated with the teaching of Buddhist yoga and the teaching of prajnaparamita. The meditator will go to a charnel ground or some such lonely, frightening place, and deliberately sit in an atmosphere where fear arises. Then he tries not to run away from it, but to stay in the fear, or, as it is described in the scriptures, he watches the face of fear and having watched this face of fear, and if he has still any feeling of fear, he surrenders to it. So having surrendered to the fear, and having gone into it, then he overcomes fear.

This is a tradition developed as an extension from the practice of selflessness and the bodhisattva practice in general.

One of the verses this particular school uses is:

The best protection is to say:
"Do what you like to me"
That is the best protection rather than
"Do not hurt me."

The Age of Milarepa

After Atisha brought the Kadam teaching from India, Buddhism went on developing in Tibet. This period was known as "The Early Stage of Translation." In the later stage of the Translation period thousands of translators went to India, and scriptures were translated all the time. Marpa, the teacher of Milarepa, was the leader of this movement. He went to India and studied under many great Indian teachers, of whom the foremost was Naropa, and had to go through very severe training. He translated most of these teachings into Tibetan, and then had pupils such as Milarepa. At this time Buddhism developed, particularly with the tradition of Marpa and Naropa, toward a meeting point of devotion and meditation and the practice of yoga. By now the basic teaching of Buddhism was fully introduced in Tibet and no more scriptures of fundamental Buddhism needed translating at all, but only certain teachings of yoga which were not taught in institutions in India, only in certain remote parts of the Himalayan regions such as the monastery of Naropa, Pulahari. Therefore translators had great difficulty in finding these remote teachers, and of course they also had to find which was the right teacher, so it became very difficult for them to find a text to translate. More difficulties arose even while they were doing this translating; for instance in the life of Marpa. He translated about five volumes of a particular teaching of mantrayana with various yoga teachings, and was bringing them back up to Nepal. Another translator had also made the journey to India and, while they were returning, he realized that Marpa had something more than he had, so one day when they were crossing a river the other translator deliberately destroyed the whole translation text and threw it into the river, and Marpa had to go back and start all

over again. Other difficulties occurred, such as people being killed, as of course at that time people had to walk all the way from India, crossing the Himalayan mountains and fording great rivers. These journeys were very dangerous.

After Marpa returned to Tibet and taught Tibetans, particularly Milarepa, he would not just give away his teaching, because it was such a wonderful precious thing for which he had sacrificed gold and silver, and indeed his whole life. After all, just receiving teachings is not enough. There must always be a necessary preparation. At the start of learning there must be some manual work of some kind; at some stage hardships must be gone through. This is necessary, and we see a perfect example in Milarepa's life story. This was the start of the Kagyü teachings, and they are, one might say, similar to the bhakti yoga of Hinduism. When you read the songs of Milarepa, you will see that at the beginning he always starts with an invocation to Marpa, his teacher, who was the embodiment of Buddha, dharma, sangha. So Kagyü became particularly known as the tradition of devotion and faith—faith combined with bhakti yoga, and also the study of guru yoga. This discovery of the inner guru is basic to the teaching of the kagyü. At the beginning stage there is a tremendous, sometimes even an emotional, involvement with the guru. Milarepa, for instance, could hardly part with his guru, but wanted to remain with him all his life, but then at some stage certain circumstances sent him away, and when his guru deliberately sent him away a kind of confusion was caused. He was not quite sure whether this great devotion was inside or outside—a kind of mixed feeling. At some stage the pupil thinks his guru is outside, living in a certain part of the country, but also there is something familiar about the guru inside him as well, so there is this rather mixed feeling. Then at some stage, because of this, the inner guru becomes more and more developed. Gradually the pupil becomes quite certain that the external guru is merely a symbol, and then he discovers the inner guru, and after this the inner guru remains with him all the time. Reading the life of Milarepa you see that first the guru comes as the human guru, Marpa, and then as the inner wisdom of the guru; and finally there is no division between inner and outer and the whole of life becomes the guru. That happened on the day when he returned to his own part of the country and found that his house had collapsed and was just a ruin, his parents had died, and all his fields were filled with weeds. So everything was chaos, and his great expectation of

returning to a cozy home was completely shattered because there was nothing to return to. This great disappointment taught him that he could only learn by experience, by going into his own country—only memory left, and everything entirely chaos. This is known as the world guru, or the "play of Guru Lalita," the guru which is the teaching of impermanence, which, in fact, he had to go into, because there was nothing else for him to do. This made him go into retreat and practice, not because he could not find any other occupation but because, although it is a great sorrow to see that everything has gone into chaos, everybody has died, and everything been destroyed; still there is something ironic and almost happy about it. Again there is a kind of mixed feeling, because although it is the end of one particular thing it is also the beginning of something else, and this is the meeting point. Dukkha becomes the stepping stone to freedom. This particular teaching of Milarepa, the Buddhist bhakti yoga, is well known, and this tradition is handed down throughout the tantric tradition of Buddhism in Tibet.

Gampopa, Milarepa's disciple, had quite a different background. At this particular stage Buddhism could not remain simply as Milarepa had taught, in the sense that the practice of yoga is not the whole of Buddhism although with the practice of mahamudra it is the essence of it. It was very necessary to introduce the monastic aspect of Buddhism in Tibet, the hinayana aspect. Gampopa was a fully ordained monk in the Kadam tradition when he first came to Milarepa. We are told that Milarepa asked him, "How long have you been practicing meditation?" "Usually I meditate for about six hours." Milarepa asked, "Do you get any results?" "No, nothing particularly," answered Gampopa, "but I tried to do my best, and I have retreated to the mountains and meditated all day, visualizing the divinities and so on." Then Milarepa laughed and said, "How can you do such meditation practice for six hours a day without any signs of progress?" This was the point where Milarepa asked Gampopa to give up all his practice of this kind of meditation and start again right from the beginning. Gampopa thought this meant that he must just give up and follow the yoga tradition, clothed in white cotton cloth. He was prepared to do this, but he was then told that Milarepa did not exactly want him to give up, because he did not want to make Gampopa like himself, but to bring out his own inner teaching. Each pupil has a different character, quite different from the teacher, so therefore it is not considered best to expand the teacher's ego, or to transform

the ego in the person and make him just like the teacher, but to bring out the particular character in the pupil and to develop this character. Also he said that for the future of Buddhism it was necessary for Gampopa to teach in the robe. Milarepa was pleased that his future pupils would now practice the teaching of the Kagyü school in the full sense.

Gampopa then meditated for nearly six weeks. He was a very intelligent and intellectual person, having read so many books on meditation, and every time he meditated he had visions. For instance, on the first day he had a vision of the Buddha with his five disciples. Although he lived about three miles away from Milarepa's cave, he thought, "Well, this time I have seen the Buddha himself!" and in the morning, even without any breakfast, he ran to his teacher. Milarepa was just having breakfast and asked him what had happened. Gampopa said, "A wonderful thing has happened. I have seen the Buddha himself. I had a vision of the Buddha himself." Milarepa did not say anything, he just sent him back to meditate. Gampopa went back and meditated and the next day he saw something else—a mandala. It was so realistic, off he went to his teacher. He got halfway, and then realized "I think this is only a thing," so he had to go back. Then during the next six weeks of continuous vigil like that, he kept thinking, "Milarepa says there is nothing but now, now, now!" Then the next time, Gampopa saw six worlds, the whole existence of worlds, the worlds of heavens, of pretas, and so on, all in stages, with everybody drinking milk, everyone giving milk to each other. Then someone came from the world of hell right up to heaven, and then it started beginning again—a continuing circle of giving milk. Then he thought, "This is a wonderful thing now." Because his teacher had said, "Now, now," then this time he was quite sure that it all meant something very special, so then he ran all the way, so early that Milarepa was still asleep. He said, "Wake up!" and told him all about this vision. Milarepa said, "Well, I don't know what you call studying. Although I am not much of a scholar, I have read one or two books on the prajnaparamita. It says that everything is illusion, but you scholars never seem to fully understand this. Go back and leave me undisturbed, because we've had enough of that to last our whole lives." Finally Gampopa had a dream that he cut off his own head, and he saw it rolling off down the hill. That was the end of the visions, presenting cutting the root of the self.

Gampopa then returned to the mountain of Taglha Gampo, and there he established his own monastery, so this was one of the first monaster-

ies where Yoga and Vinaya practices were combined. This is one of the first examples of a Tibetan monastery where the yogins practiced meditation and where there was also a monastic institution of ten thousand monks. On one particular occasion disciples of Gampopa, who were known as the three great sons of Gampopa, were meditating on the yoga of inner heat, and their meditation state developed in such an irresistible way that they had to come out of their caves and they began to sing yogic songs. According to Gampopa they were dancing around the monastery in the street, when suddenly the man in charge of discipline caught them and expelled them from the monastery. These three disciples were future regent abbots of the monastery, so it is very interesting to read that in Gampopa's lecture to them he says that if anyone had even a minor experience, this experience must not be revealed, and one must not be emotionally involved in it. This particular teaching is a tradition still well known in Tibet, especially in the lama gyüpa colleges, where the monk in charge of discipline was supposed to check the corridor when all the monks went into the assembly hall, in case anyone left his footprints in the stone. If anyone did, then they must immediately expel the said monk, because this college was not a place for performing miracles, but a place of development, ready for the final real miracle that one can perform. Miracles are unnecessary. You have to develop the balanced state of self that can be controlled, but you do not need to show it! In a way, the greatest miracle in the Buddhist religion is seeing the balanced state of being.

The Mahasattva Avalokiteshvara

Homage to the Great Compassion, the essential nature of all beings!

THERE HAS BEEN much mention of Avalokiteshvara throughout the centuries, particularly in mahayana Buddhist countries. And this Avalokiteshvara, or Lokeshvara, or Kesarpani, is a well-known figure in Buddhist texts, such as the *Prajnaparamita-hridaya (The Heart of Transcendent Wisdom,* or the *Heart Sutra),* where Avalokiteshvara represents supreme compassion and Shariputra represents supreme wisdom, and they are having a discussion which is said to be the word of Buddha. This is one of the twelve different ways in which Buddha's teaching is presented. That is to say that Buddha created the situation, but these two actually speak in place of him.

So Avalokiteshvara plays a very important part. It is not just a mythical concept, it is not a deity, it is not even a bodhisattva in the sense of somebody on the path to enlightenment, but Avalokiteshvara is a mahasattva. In the Chinese Buddhist tradition Avalokiteshvara appears in feminine form and in Tibetan tradition in masculine form. Nevertheless this is one and the same Avalokiteshvara. Let me make clear that there is a mandala of Avalokiteshvara; it contains a whole mandala. This is why differences appear between the feminine and masculine principles. And the meaning of Avalokiteshvara is shown in various sutras, such as the *Sadharmapundarika,* where Avalokiteshvara appears as the personification of the enlightened state of mind. So Avalokiteshvara is the awakened mind. But this awakened mind, or bodhi, is not just highly

intelligent or all-knowing, but it also contains compassion, which is one of the most important aspects of the awakened state.

Compassion, in this particular sense, does not mean being compassionate to a person, or being sympathetic, or collecting charity—one has to go beyond this. Now compassion in this sense, or karuna, is known in Tibet as the noble heart, that is to say the magnetic or the moving quality of enlightenment. So enlightenment, or bodhi, consists of movement and it consists of wisdom. These two qualities are the most important of all. So when one talks about wisdom, omniscience, clarity, or bodhi—the thought of enlightenment—this is represented by Manjushri, the Maker of All Sound, the Maker of the Word. In the recitation of the sacred name in the *Manjushri Sutra* it is explained that Manjushri is "AH"—the first word of human beings. Similarly, the first movement, the first flow of love, the first forwardness, is Avalokiteshvara.

Obviously, then, the idea of Avalokiteshvara is a profound subject. In Indian mythology Avalokiteshvara is regarded as a god; Lokite means the Lord of the World, and Avalokiteshvara means Transcendent Protector, or Lord, of the World. And the meaning of this is that one cannot conquer the world, one cannot become "the Lord of the World," unless there is "Ava"—the transcendent form, which is compassion. And this compassion is not just one kind of compassion, it has many different aspects, different dimensions. Just as an atom, no matter how minute it may be, can be divided into a center and north, south, east, west, above, and below, so also compassion has different sides to it or different aspects. Thus we have the feminine aspect, or the aspect of quickness. As mentioned earlier, this has nothing to do with compassion in the sense of feeling love for someone or having charitable feelings, but relates rather to rhythm, to movement, to forwardness. So the quickness of compassion is represented by Avalokiteshvara in the feminine form, which is particularly well known in the Japanese and the Chinese traditions, perhaps owing to some association with the character of these nations, which is very active. The other aspect is the male Avalokiteshvara, which is associated with solidity and stability. Hence the figure of Avalokiteshvara is often shown holding a jewel, which represents the noble stone. And this Avalokiteshvara is sometimes referred to as the Son Avalokiteshvara, which represents strength, stability, and oneness. For wherever there is great force there must also be great stability. For example, in the case of lightning, without this stability the quick movement of

lightning would not be sharp and direct and powerful as it is. Therefore this movement within stillness occurs and these are the two principle aspects of Avalokiteshvara. And the male form of Avalokiteshvara is known in Tibetan as Chenrezik (or "Glancing Eye," as one translator has it) and this means "He Who Sees All Sentient Beings." But he does not move. He merely sees or observes and he never makes a mistake. He just looks, in all directions, and prepares for the next compassionate act.

The feminine aspect of Avalokiteshvara is the six-syllable Avalokiteshvara, OM MANI PADME HUM. This, of course, represents the sound or the movement of Avalokiteshvara—something which moves, something which goes forward. So the sound represents the feminine part of Avalokiteshvara and the male part is the compassionate thought, stillness, wisdom, the deep-rooted one, which is particularly revered in the Tibetan tradition. Therefore we see these two particular aspects of Avalokiteshvara.

Nevertheless, this idea of compassion is in fact the warmth within enlightenment. Enlightenment must have warmth, enlightenment must have this willingness-to-do-everything. Of course it must have prajna, it must have jnana, but there must also be karuna. And that willingness, that being-ready-to-move, is essentially what Avalokiteshvara represents.

In stories and in images Avalokiteshvara is often shown carrying a deerskin on his back. This symbol is used because the deer is a compassionate animal. It does not kill other creatures, but lives on a vegetarian diet. And here Avalokiteshvara appears as a sage. For in the Indian tradition sages often carry their seat on their shoulders when they are traveling, and when they want to sit down they simply spread this on the floor and sit on it. In this particular case the deerskin symbolizes harmlessness, that is to say, the act of compassion. When compassion acts it never harms, it never hurts anyone, but always moves gently forward in order to fulfill its purpose.

On top of Avalokiteshvara's crown one sees the figure of Amitabha. This is because compassion must also have the attribute of wisdom, of clarity, which Amitabha represents. And one often finds Avalokiteshvara portrayed as having a thousand arms, and these symbolize his innumerable activities. There is a story about Avalokiteshvara which relates how he took a vow to save all sentient beings in that very lifetime; and he did whatever he could and then went up and looked around, and he saw that even more innumerable beings were suffering. At this point he was

almost on the verge of breaking his vow and he felt that he could not help anyone any more. This is compassion without wisdom, compassion without knowing. It is also compassion with ambition, a one-faced compassion. And this is one of the reasons why Avalokiteshvara is often shown with a figure of Buddha above his head, which means that compassion must be without ambition. It must also be ever-growing. As long as there are more sentient beings and as long as there is more that needs to be done, his compassion also increases. And this shows that compassion is something within us. Where there is new suffering or a new outbreak of violence, that violence contains another eye, another hand, of Avalokiteshvara. The two things always go together. There is always a kind of negative, but there is always a positive which comes with it. In this particular sense, then, one should not exclude the negative and work only for the positive, but realize that the negative contains the positive within itself. Therefore the act of compassion, the act of Avalokiteshvara, is never ended.

That is the basic meaning of Avalokiteshvara. Of course, there are variations, such as Kesarpani, the eleven-headed Avalokiteshvara, the four-armed Avalokiteshvara, Chintamani, and many other variations, which are to be found in different scriptures and iconographies. Nevertheless, they all stem from one source, namely the concept of Avalokiteshvara as representing compassion. He is not only a bodhisattva, he is a mahasattva, or great being—the great sattva. That is to say that nobody can become a sattva until he has fully developed compassion. Therefore it is stated in many of the sutras, shastras, and tantras, including the *Lankavatara Sutra* and the *Uttaratantra,* that compassion is the companion of wisdom. Wisdom has depth and clarity, but it also needs to act. And that action is a perpetual forward movement. It never turns back having lost its purpose but goes on continuously, like the traveling of light. Light never returns but always goes on and on and on. Similarly, this active part of the awakened state which is in all of us, that is Avalokiteshvara, or compassion. There is an interesting passage in the *Bodhisattvacharyavatara* where Shantideva describes even the love of a fierce animal for its young as an element of compassion. Compassion comes in all sorts of different ways, in a physical way, in a mental way, perhaps in a primitive way, for Avalokiteshvara has many hands and many eyes; he reaches everywhere and he sees everywhere.

The Way of the Bodhisattva

IN THE NORTHERN Buddhist countries, Tibet, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and so on, one of the essential characteristics is the mahayana concept of the active bodhisattva.

First let us deal with taking the bodhisattva vow. It is always necessary that the person who wants to follow the bodhisattva path must start from the beginning, from the level of hinayana. This is fundamental. No mahayanist would be given bodhisattva ordination unless he first took the triple refuge in the Buddha, dharma, and sangha, and secondly he practiced meditation, consisting of the general samatha and vipassana practice.

Bodhisattva practice therefore is based on the discipline of the hinayana, which prepares the sila paramita, or discipline ground, because the act of the bodhisattva is sometimes described as the act of freedom. In order to realize the freedom element, one must first have a discipline. Otherwise the freedom becomes a selfish freedom, or wild. Having understood that people who follow the bodhisattva order must achieve a certain amount of quietness—stillness of mind—through the practice of shamatha, he will probably start with the anapanasatti practice of counting breathing, or concentration on the rising and falling of the breath; or practicing awareness of actions, or mental concentration on one of the thirty-six parts of the body, and various other hinayana methods of meditation. Then, having developed a firm foundation of quietness—abiding in the peace—the bodhisattva develops insight, and that is the first entrance to bodhisattva work.

This development of wisdom, insight, is the development, one might say, of the bodhi nature, or the essence of bodhi. And this essence of

bodhi is the discovery that within the continuity of mindfulness there is a kind of natural state of mindfulness, a natural state of beingness. As his discipline becomes more and more perfect and he is able to concentrate fully, he realizes that he does not need to concentrate any more; the concentration develops within him. And that element of recognition of concentration, recognition of a natural state of concentration, is what is known as the insight of bodhi.

Whenever anyone takes a bodhisattva vow, he undertakes that from that day until the attainment of enlightenment he will help all sentient beings, because at this particular stage, when he reaches a perfect stillness of mind, then his stillness of mind reflects outside. We can easily understand this, because people who are naturally aggressive create a kind of aggressiveness; and people who are naturally proud—spiritually proud or proud in the ordinary sense—also radiate a kind of pride in the atmosphere they create. They somehow reduce other people to nothing, and produce a kind of space between other people and themselves. So radiation of character always comes in. So in the bodhisattva act, when he is following the hinayana level of mindfulness and achieves this quietness, this stillness of mind, he cannot help also helping others, even by example, by what they see of his behavior. He automatically radiates a serenity to other people; and therefore taking the bodhisattva vow is merely overcoming any selfish attitude attaching to this, and acknowledging that this radiation of the peaceful mind in the bodhisattva does not belong to him anymore, it belongs to other sentient beings. So he does not possess any good qualities at all.

In other words, it is one of the most essential things in the practice or realization of bodhi that you must completely surrender your desire to want to become and your desire to achieve. Until you surrender these you cannot achieve anything, because achievement of bodhi is not an external object, an external achievement; it is the discovery of something *in* one; and in order to make it come inward, one has first to surrender, give up the external desire to go out, to want to achieve further, to want to go higher. So therefore the bodhisattva deliberately—this has a psychological implication—he deliberately gives up the desire to become a buddha, the desire to become a perfect person, the desire to practice mindfulness, and the desire to work and meditate in his own personal way—he gives it up completely; so whatever he does becomes for others.

But that does not mean neglecting himself. In fact he develops greater awareness in himself, because in order to help others he must become fully aware all the time. Because he really acts as a kind of mirror, he must be perfectly clean and clear. This of course stabilizes the bodhisattva's act, so that he is not emotionally involved, since he is not acting out of personal ambition at all; and therefore he becomes detached, like a doctor doing an operation. In this way the bodhisattva is detached from his own personal achievement, and when there is no personal achievement you have what is known as the true type of shunyata, that is the shunyata, or the anatta, or discovery of selflessness. You are not you anymore at all—you are simply a channel for other people. That is the first discovery of anatta, where the bodhisattva has gone through all the study of the five skandhas and the development of mental states, and therefore he is well versed in the knowledge; but nevertheless he discovers that his work has nothing to do with himself and is entirely for others. That is why the bodhisattva's work never returns. His work is always moving forward. It is said that even in a state of sleep or a neutral state, or when eating or in any other state, the bodhisattva act continues and his merit is continuously growing, and this is because his act is not based on any form of self. His work is completely for others, therefore this openness, this nonpossessiveness of his act, becomes greater, the field of merit becomes wider, not excluding anything at all.

Then comes the second stage, where the bodhisattva follows the six transcendent acts—dana paramita, shila paramita, and so on. These are very important to study. The first one means a gift—giving out. It is associated with the first principle of a bodhisattva, and means that the bodhisattva learns how to give out. And in giving out, he also learns. That is the perfect example of the teacher—the dana paramita, sometimes called the dana dharma. Whatever a bodhisattva does, it is for others, therefore he is giving a gift to the dharma of dharma. Instructors and teachers should follow these footsteps. The perfect teacher does not just give out what he has learned, but while he is giving out, he himself also learns. So he is an advanced teacher? Not at all; he is an advanced *student*, but he tries to help others all the way along. As he teaches he also learns. Therefore the bodhisattva has respect for his pupils. He does not overlook them. He always has respect. So he is always prepared to investigate, prepared to learn from his pupils—always willing to learn. But in developing this respect toward his pupils, the bodhisattva does

not wish to make his disciples just like himself; because he does not want to expand his ego on them, but merely sow a seed of whatever may be in the person. Therefore, because of this detached attitude, the dana paramita benefits both himself and others.

Then there is shila paramita, or the transcendent morality, which means that, because of his continuous awareness of his attitude and work, he must find a perfect way of life. And he lives this perfect life, this life of constant mindfulness, for others, not because of any ambition or any particular desire; it is part of his act; because he has to act as a kind of symbol, a reminder for other people; just like having a buddha rupa—it is a symbol of stillness, meditative quietness, a symbol of nirvana. So the bodhisattva has to act as a living symbol, a living example, a demonstration for other people.

And then kshanti paramita is patience, and that is necessary because there is always difficulty in obeying certain tasks. The bodhisattva, even though he leads a perfect life and gives out everything, and by giving out also gains everything, still has some very difficult tasks. Until one achieves a certain level, one cannot help still *trying* to do something; there is always an effort involved. It is like the story of Avalokiteshvara when he first took a vow that from his first kalpa, his first eon, he was going to save all sentient beings; and, having worked for one eon, then the next eon he awoke from his meditation, and he looked around to find many more sentient beings in the world than there were before—and then he gave up his vow. The minute he gave up his vow, his head cracked into one thousand pieces—that is the analogy. Then Amitabha appears to him and says that now he is going to bless Avalokiteshvara; and his effort, his energy becomes a thousandfold greater than before; and Avalokiteshvara is blessed and continues with his work. Which analyzed means that patience also needs prajna, wisdom. If the bodhisattva is trying to work without wisdom, then he still has the concept of time; and also he still has a certain amount of ambition. So he has to achieve both skillful means and wisdom. Amitabha here represents his own advanced insight which instructs him saying, "Your work is not complete; continue your work." And the reason why his effort, his power, becomes greater is because he learns this particular lesson at this particular period, and so at the next stage he becomes more advanced. The whole concept here is expressed in the image of Avalokiteshvara; you will find a small

Amitabha in his crown, symbolizing that the act of the bodhisattva contains insight.

Then comes virya, or energy. Virya means, as Shantideva describes in a very beautiful way, not so much working hard and just being persistent; but it signifies understanding of the meaning, discovery of the meaning. Therefore the bodhisattva's work automatically becomes creative, and therefore more effective. For instance, if he is giving a talk every day, 365 talks a year, then, if he is not learning anything in the course of these talks, toward the end of the year he would have no more subjects to talk about. Because he would have given out what he had learned. But virya here means that there is a discovery in each talk; so, when he gives his first instruction, his second instruction, or maybe his hundredth, it always produces more possibilities for the next; he discovers something. There is always excitement and discovery in his giving-out process, and he is not wearing out his knowledge. Because of this excitement, this discovery, his effort becomes more and more vigorous; and that is why virya is vigorous from a sense of happiness, joy, the joy of dharma, because he discovers more and more each time.

And then the next thing is of course dhyana or mindfulness, awareness; and this awareness is understanding of the situation. Shantideva also describes this as meaning that the bodhisattva does not react immediately to a situation or sudden discovery; he considers it. As he considers it carefully, he discovers the coincidence of the situation. This kind of coincidence is the same as we have in the twelve chains of the Wheel of Existence. They appear to be by chance; there is a kind of chance situation which appears to be by coincidence, but there is always meaning in them. It is not chance at all; it is a natural development, a pattern of the universal; there is always this—one thing leads to another—the karmic kind of creation. But they hold meaning. The bodhisattva in this particular stage becomes very much aware of this acute situation, but he does not react immediately; therefore he always makes the right choice. That is to say, he is always clear and confident enough to see the *first* inspiration, the *first* choice. The bodhisattva is in a state of dhyana; he discovers he has a first-flash memory, first-flash wisdom of the right situation, and then he does not interpret it any more, does not analyze anymore, and he can very quietly, calmly, let this knowledge develop; and then, when the situation has arrived, and his knowledge is fully discovered by discovery of this subject, he makes decisions. Whatever action

he takes proceeds from his own intelligence, but with a certain understanding of the pattern of this coincidence. Therefore the bodhisattva never makes a mistake, because he is in control of this real continuity of coincidence, of the true universal pattern, true karmic pattern. And here I am using *karmic* in a rather broad sense; it means happenings of various times and developments rather than just the cause and effect of karma.

And then the last thing is the sixth paramita, the prajna; and this prajna is wisdom; the most important of all. This is really shunyata also; and this is the particular stage where bodhisattvas fully achieve the nonexistence of self. You see, you cannot achieve the knowledge of nonexistence without going through the six steps of actions—generosity, morality, patience, energy/vigor, perfect dhyana; and these five are like the five means and then prajna is like a light which lights the skillful means into a full understanding. This full understanding means that the bodhisattva discovers the real true nature of world appearance, the true truth, the absolute truth and the relative truth. So here the bodhisattva realizes the full essence of relative truth. That is to say he discovers, without going into the higher state of shunyata, that form is form, sound is sound, feeling is feeling, perception is perception. He then discovers the true nature, true isness, of the form—of this relative truth. The first introduction of shunyata to the bodhisattva is that for the first time he sees things as they really are. Clearly sees, because between the bodhisattva himself and others—objects, five-sense objects—there is no barrier, but he is able to make direct contact, for the first time clearly seeing the objects. This is not the awakened state of mind of the Buddha; but this is a first glimpse of the first truth; he does not say, "This is false, therefore there is no form"; he does not defend emptiness as described in the texts; he does not defend emptiness and he does not emphasize emptiness, saying that this is false and that there is no such thing as form, it is just emptiness. He would not say it. He will say that there *is* form; this *is* form; and in fact a bodhisattva will be able to describe particular objects with wonderful knowledge. He sees very clearly. This is different from the concepts we discover from the practice of shamatha meditation, and also from what arhats discover. This is the difference: Arhats discover that everything is voidness, emptiness, another form of emptiness, not shunyata emptiness, but emptiness from the point of view of nothingness. This, from the point of view of a bodhisattva is very crude, because it is merely analyzing, you cannot feel it, you cannot see it; you

have to analyze, you just have to believe in it. Whereas the bodhisattva's discovery of emptiness—the shunyata aspect—is understanding that as well, but seeing things so clearly that, by seeing things so clearly and perfectly, there is no psychological form involved.

As an example: In any talk of a table we do not usually see the full aspect of a table, but just our own version and our own concept and our own attitude to a table; and to you and me this table would differ. I would think in terms of the Tibetan mind, and others would think in terms of their own attitude and way. There is always the table itself; what a table is; the tableness aspect; and then, on top of that there are differing concepts of a table. There is always our attitude to table, rather than actually seeing the table itself, the *isness* of table.

In this way the bodhisattva begins to see very clearly, in a down-to-earth and direct manner; he begins to see prajna develop. And having developed wisdom, he approaches the two kinds of anatta—the anatta of selflessness and the anatta of dharma. Both are selflessness, but the first is selflessness meaning only *without a self;* there is no self because everything is within the reach of time, and everything is within the reach of atoms. But with dharma anatta, all dharma begins to be anatta. So you do not analyze *because you do not see it.* You do not say that there is any *emptiness* of water; it is *absence* of water; because in the presence of water you can still describe the nothingness of water. And in fact, *because* there is water, therefore some can see very clearly the sunyata of water.

So now the bodhisattva begins to see in the two ways. But—and this is very important—he never denies the existence of feeling concepts. He in fact speaks for it. He says there are feelings; feelings of happiness and suffering and so on; these exist; but still it is shunyata. So, in order to describe shunyata, there is no need to go into details of nothingness—not-feeling and not-being and so on. Very being is in fact the essence of shunyata, and comes first; and the dharma anatta is the last stage in the bodhisattva experience where, instead of describing objects individually, he begins to see through his wide panoramic awareness which we have been talking about—he begins to see the sameness of things as well. You see, bodhisattvas are able, up to then, to direct their wisdom to particular objects, and then they see nothing else; but the second step enables the bodhisattva to see the object in panoramic awareness; and there his shunyata concept becomes the *sameness* of everything as well at the same time.

So the bodhisattva need not analyze so much, need not study; he now lives in the positive aspect of shunyata. That is the final lesson of the bodhisattva, the luminous state of shunyata. We have so far been saying that form is emptiness and emptiness is form, voidness, or whatever you like to call it; and we were able to see the negative part of it; but the last bit of development here is that form is *luminous,* and *luminosity* is form. And there is a kind of living atmosphere in shunyata; this is really the living awareness in the practice of meditation. In the practice of meditation we often have a glimpse of this; although it is a kind of quietness and nothingness in one sense, yet it is completely full—there is some dynamic element in it; not only a dynamic but a clear element; not only clear but luminous. And there the essence of mind—the buddha nature—may be described as luminosity. There is no mind, but only luminosity—only brilliance, only clarity, only light. And that is the bodhisattva's final discovery of shunyata in a form of positiveness—in a positive, existing state of living shunyata—a form of luminous concept.

Now, what is the final thing the bodhisattva has to discover? How to relate this to others, and how to create situations. The differences between the bodhisattva who reaches this state and the buddha, is that the bodhisattvas have a clear perception and knowledge of shunyata, but are not able to put it into effect; but a buddha is able to create the right situation, where he can have relatedness to a situation. That is to say that buddhas do not even act for sentient beings at all. It is described in the text as a potter's wheel; first you make an effort with the wheel, but once the wheel is going continuously, then it produces pots automatically; you just throw clay, and they are produced; you don't have to set the wheel in motion again once it is started. In the same way, the Buddha does not have to act consciously, directly; he acts as a kind of mirror, where things are reflected. So it is a question of being perfect—in a full sense. There is no need to try to be perfect; but being natural becomes the most perfect way.

You may remember a story from the life of the Buddha; three people asked him three different questions, and he gave just one answer, and that answer solved the queries of three people because the Buddha is able to create this right kind of environment, the right kind of situation. There are hundreds of arhats, and hundreds of bodhisattvas, but there would be only one buddha at a time. Which means that only one person would be able to create this kind of situation where others could fit in.

That is the karma of the Buddha—and this karma of the Buddha is described in great detail in the scriptures. The karma or act of Buddha is vast like space, pure like crystal, indestructible as a mirror image, has a wish-fulfilling aspect like a wish-fulfilling gem, and a luminous aspect like the sun. These are the five analogies used; and therefore now we begin to see that the mahaparanirvana is an achievement of the positive, beyond limitation of positive-negative; the achievement of the real dynamic act of the bodhisattva, the act of Buddha, the act of bodhi.

The Way of Maha Ati

BY CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA AND RIGDZIN SHIKPO

THE ALAYA

THE GROUND of samsara and nirvana, the beginning and end of both confusion and realization, the nature of universal shunyata and of all apparent phenomena, more fundamental even than the trikaya because it is free from bias toward enlightenment, is the alaya, sometimes called the pure or original mind.

Although prajna sees in it no basis for such concepts as different aspects, yet three fundamental aspects of complete openness, natural perfection, and absolute spontaneity are distinguished by upaya as useful devices.

COMPLETE OPENNESS

All aspects of every phenomenon are completely clear and lucid. The whole universe is open and unobstructed, everything mutually interpenetrating.

Since all things are naked, clear, and free from obscurations, there is nothing to attain or to realize. The nature of things naturally appears and is naturally present in time-transcending awareness.

The everyday practice is simply to develop a complete acceptance and openness to all situations and emotions and to all people, experiencing

everything totally without mental reservations and blockages, so that one never withdraws or centralizes onto oneself.

This produces a tremendous energy which is usually locked up in the processes of mental evasion and generally running away from life experiences.

Clarity of awareness may in its initial stages be unpleasant or fear inspiring. If so, then one should open oneself completely to the pain or the fear and welcome it. In this way the barriers created by one's own habitual emotional reactions and prejudices are broken down.

When performing the meditation practice one should get the feeling of opening oneself out completely to the whole universe with absolute simplicity and nakedness of mind, ridding oneself of all "protecting" barriers.

Don't mentally split in two when meditating, one part of the mind watching the other like a cat watching a mouse.

One should realize that one does not meditate in order to go deeply into oneself and withdraw from the world.

Even when meditating on chakras in Buddhist yoga there is no introspective concentration—complete openness of mind is still the keynote.

Natural Perfection

Everything is naturally perfect just as it is, completely pure and undefiled.

All phenomena naturally appear in their uniquely correct modes and situations, forming ever-changing patterns full of meaning and significance, like participants in a great dance.

Everything is symbol, yet there is no difference between the symbol and the truth symbolized.

With no effort or practice whatsoever liberation, enlightenment, and buddhahood are already fully developed and perfected.

The everyday practice is just ordinary life itself. Since the underdeveloped state does not exist, there is no need to behave in any special way or to try to attain or practice anything.

There should be no feeling of striving to reach some exalted goal or higher state, since this simply produces something conditioned and artificial that will act as an obstruction to the free flow of the mind.

One should never think of oneself as "sinful" or worthless, but as naturally pure and perfect, lacking nothing.

When performing meditation practice one should think of it as just a natural function of everyday life, like eating or breathing, not as a special, formal event to be undertaken with great seriousness and solemnity. One must realize that to meditate is to pass beyond effort, beyond practice, beyond aims and goals, and beyond the dualism of bondage and liberation.

Meditation is always perfect, so there is no need to correct anything. Since everything that arises is simply the play of the mind, there are no bad meditation sessions and no need to judge thoughts as good or evil. Therefore one should not sit down to meditate with various hopes and fears about the outcome—one just does it, with no self-conscious feeling of "I am meditating," without effort, without strain, without attempting to control or force the mind, without trying to become peaceful.

If one finds one is going astray in any of these ways, stop meditating and simply rest and relax for a while before resuming.

If one has experiences that one interprets as "results," either during or after meditation, do not make anything special of them, but just observe them as phenomena. Above all, do not attempt to repeat them, since this opposes the natural spontaneity of the mind.

Absolute Spontaneity

All phenomena are completely new and fresh, absolutely unique at the instant of their appearance and entirely free from all concepts of past, present, and future, as if experienced in another dimension of time.

The continual stream of new discovery and fresh revelation and inspiration which arises at every moment is the manifestation of the eternal youth of the living dharma and its wonder, splendor, and spontaneity are the play or dance aspect of the universe as guru.

Learn to see everyday life as a mandala in which one is at the center, and be free of the bias and prejudice of past conditioning, present desires, and future hopes and expectations.

The figures of the mandala are the day-to-day objects of one's life experience, moving in the great dance or play of the universe, the symbolism by which the guru reveals profound and ultimate meaning and significance. Therefore be natural and spontaneous, accept and learn from everything.

See the ironic, amusing side of irritating situations.

In meditation see through the illusion of past, present, and future. The past is but a present memory or condition, the future a present projection, and the present itself vanishes before it can be grasped.

Free oneself from past memories of, and conceptions about, meditation. Each moment of meditation is completely unique and full of the potentiality of new discovery, so one is incapable of judging meditation by past sessions or by theory.

Just plunge straight into meditation at this very moment with one's whole mind and be free from hesitation, boredom, or excitement.

The Practice of Meditation

It is traditional, and best if possible, to sit cross-legged when meditating, with the back erect but not rigid. However, it is most important to feel comfortable, so it is better to sit in a chair if sitting cross-legged proves painful.

One's attitude of mind should be inspired by the three fundamental aspects, whether the meditation is with or without form, although in the latter case the three aspects constitute the whole meditation itself, with particular emphasis on complete openness.

Meditations with form are preceded by, followed by, and contain periods without form and similarly it may often prove desirable, if not essential, to precede a period of formless meditation by a period with form.

To provide for this eventuality many preliminary meditations have been developed over the centuries of Buddhist practice, the most important classes being meditations on breathing, mantra repetitions, and visualizations.

The second and third of these classes need personal instruction from

one's guru before they can be attempted, but a few words on the first would not be out of place here, since the method used varies little from person to person.

First, let the mind follow the in-and-out rhythm of the breath until it becomes calm and tranquil; then rest the mind more and more on the breath until one's whole being seems to be identified with it.

Finally, become aware of the breath leaving the body and going out into space and gradually transfer the attention away from the breath and toward the sensation of spaciousness and expansion.

By letting this final sensation merge into complete openness, one moves into the sphere of formless meditation proper.

In all probability the above descriptions of the three fundamental aspects and the meditation practices involved will seem very vague and inadequate.

This is inevitable since they attempt to describe what is not only beyond words but beyond thought, and invite practice of what is essentially a state of being.

The words are simply a form of upaya (i.e., skill in means), a hint, which if acted upon may enable the innate natural wisdom and the naturally perfect action to arise spontaneously.

Sometimes in meditation there is a gap in normal consciousness, a sudden complete openness.

This only arises when one has ceased to think in terms of meditator, meditation, and the object of meditation. It is a glimpse of reality, a sudden flash which occurs at first infrequently and then gradually more and more often. It may not be a particularly shattering or explosive experience at all, just a moment of great simplicity.

Do not make the mistake of deliberately trying to force these experiences to recur, for this is to betray the naturalness and spontaneity of reality.

The Meditation of Guru Rinpoche

In the world of complete purity,
The dwelling places of illumination are set up.
Without inside or outside,
Their entire form is of light.

There in the center is set the throne of the dharma,
The lotus seat of compassion,
And the sun throne of wisdom,
And Guru Padmasambhava is the eternal child who sits there.

End and origin of both confusion and realization,
He wears the royal robes of the three yanas,
He holds the vajra of means in his right hand,
And in his left the cup of wisdom, filled with ambrosia.

He cuts off the heads of aversion, attachment, and confusion,
And wears them as ornaments on his trident,
Which he holds to his side as a consort.
He sits in the vajra position, unmoving in meditation.

He chants HUM and PEM, drunk upon highest happiness.
The buddhas of the past, present, and future,
Shine forth through the pores of his skin.
His youthful smile is full of compassion.

His three eyes gaze out into the womb of light,
Victory is his crown, and the five buddhas
And the illumined minds of the gurus and protectors
Throng the ten directions of space.

They are like the rays of the sun,
Distinct and yet the same.
They are not inventions of the mind,
But the expression of the very nature of the universe.

Repetition of the Mantra

OM is the essence, the *dharmakaya.*
AH is the potential, the *sambhogakaya.*
HUM is the expression, the *nirmanakaya.*
VAJRA is the union of these three, the womb of the indestructible.
GURU is the inner wisdom that instructs the central point of the mandala.
PADMA is fearless compassion.
SIDDHI is the power of the womb of space, and the keen perceptiveness that arises out of it.
HUM shows that all these qualities are at one in us.

One lives in paradise, and among gods. All sounds are the eternal mantra. All thoughts are completely pure and interfused. The mantra is repeated in a soundless and motionless way, beyond thought, interpenetrating everything.

OM AH HUM VAJRA GURU PADMA SIDDHI HUM

The New Age

EVERY AGE IS AN AGE of change. This means also change in the social structure of the life of the people. There is never a still or static moment in time. As the time situations develop—there come new ways of expressing wisdom—new ways of indulging or one might say corrupting people—and new ways of creating a structure for society. So therefore from a Buddhist point of view one sees that the world is not necessarily going to achieve either a utopian golden age or for that matter going to enter a completely dark age. Now some people may think that since we say that, what is the use of trying to do anything? The point is that the whole structure—everything—depends on us—individually. We may meditate. We may pray. We may work. But we have to do it ourselves. We may think, "Our strength and energy is given to us by some great external power." But nevertheless he who feels this energy or wisdom, whatever it may be, still has to have it simplified in human terms. And this is where the practice of meditation plays a very important part, since what was originally known as "westernization" no more belongs to the West—it is purely "modernization." The machines, inventions, and technological knowledge that have developed in the world do not belong to any of the continents but are just part of the modern age, the New Age. Equally, for that matter, the spiritual knowledge also does not belong to any particular place, and this does not mean that the wisdom has to be simplified or modified as if one were making it into a neat sort of packed lunch. We can't really *popularize* anything in fact. It has been the human element that has been the source of corruption in the spiritual society, both East and West. So therefore meditation is the greatest factor, force, strength, and hope—this is everything.

I am sure that a lot of people have read and heard about the practice of meditation over and over again, but when I talk about meditation in this case it is not that of the mind pondering on different subjects, nor is it some means of achieving power, psychic power or the power of concentration, nor for that matter is it the business of trying to become a successful mentally controlled person. The meditation I am talking about is connected with life itself. Supposing that everybody has a tremendous urge to practice meditation and so they go off to retreats and become sannyasins or bhikkus or hermits and so on—there would be no one left to run this world. However much we may say we have independence, however much we think we ourselves are independent and self-sufficient, we still share and we still need what one might call the karmic link and the national karma of where we live.

And now with the structure of all countries being Americanized, with things developing as they are—vast machinery, vast organization which transcends the individual mind so that they can only be grasped in terms of computers, the whole thing has grown so big that to some people it is very frightening. Yet I would not say that this was particularly good, or for that matter particularly bad. The point is we cannot fight against it, and therefore our meditation has to be translated in terms of our pattern of life.

Living in such a world we really have to be practical for we cannot afford to divide society up into those who practice meditation and those who are workers, those who work in the factories and those who are intellectuals and spend most of their lives in books. We can't afford to anymore—the world is too small. Once we have grasped this we see that we can only develop by understanding ourselves—that before we blame the world and before we try to save the world that first of all the whole question has to come back to us—*ourselves*—starting on the nearest one, that is—me, you, us. Now in order to start this change it is going to be necessary somehow to re-create the tribal structure that has been dissolved. The tribal structure that once existed.

For instance, if you are in a big city you may feel that there is no kind of link at all. Just one person or a couple of people walking in a street, or getting on a bus, can seem kind of desolate. There is nothing as a binding factor. The only binding factor may seem to be money, but even that is not a binding factor at all. This need to re-create the tribal structure can only be understood, of course, by those who live in the West

and so have gone through the various stages of fascination for machine culture that the geographical East is going through at the moment, and of course we still are involved in it ourselves. Then comes the inevitable second stage. We feel we have no alternative, we are drawn into it and we have no control. I am sure that in the East when the technology is developed and this gigantic machinism and material force has invaded completely that they too will understand. So you see that the negative happenings of the new age also have a tremendous creative and positive element to them as well. One can't try to abandon one life and try to create a new one, but rather let us try to work with it. Let us make a beginning.

Let us take a group of ten friends—in the sense that ten must have started with one. Without one there would be no two, no three, no four. Start with one of us. Now, how A will communicate to B, and how A will understand the A-ness of himself, say, before he has any idea of B—that is the real problem. This is the problem of communication. Now we have a tremendous problem of communication. In Buddhist terminology this is called duality. There is a tremendously thick wall built between us, between you and me, each of us like animals in a zoo. All of us in cages. There is a monkey from China here—and a gorilla from Africa next door—somehow we have to remove the bars. But if we are going to remove the bars then we have to develop some kind of strength within us. This is what is really lacking. And this strength comes from faith, real faith. And faith is quite different from pride or being self-centered. This faith comes from a willingness to open out. The whole trouble stems from here. The structure of the future depends on us individually. We have arrived in an age where the study of the great wisdom of the world, religion, and tradition however important they are, are not enough. There is one more urgent thing we have to do. We must create a structure which allows a real communication. At the moment we merely have glimpses of communication that open and close. There is one person outside us and there is another busy monkey working inside us—this is known in Buddhist tradition as the monkey mind. The five senses are like five windows. The consciousness is like a monkey restlessly looking first in one window and then in another. But that is not enough.

There has to be real communication. And someone has to start. If no one begins nothing will happen. And having started and developed and

been able to contact one person then one is able to communicate to a third person, and then a fourth gradually develops, and so on.

It's no use individuals trying to search for happiness in the beginning, only to find that there's no one to share their happiness with at the end. For, in the process of finding happiness we forget what we were looking for, and we find something else, and then we go on and on and on—and it is exactly that causes the confusion. We have to see that the answer is not one of spirituality alone any more than it is one of politics alone. Some people may believe that if the whole world practiced meditation, suppose the whole world meditated for two hours every morning then went to their jobs and continued in business peacefully—some people think that would be enough. Other people think that we are fine as we are—some people live, some people die, in any case I have security, insurance, work, everything—as far as I'm concerned it doesn't affect me. Others among us think that there should be some kind of revolution, perhaps Communism, or let us say pure socialism is the only answer because the structure is wrong. And so you see there are many conflicting ideas coming in. But altogether—there is violence. There is war in Vietnam. There is protest against the war in Vietnam, so one violence has started another violence. There is war in Europe and in America too. One violence creates another. And what Buddha teaches us is not just specifically to accept it, but to understand the cause of it and try to do something creative about it. We really must try to see through events to their source. A window is smashed. All right, we've done it. Next week the window is repaired again. We smash it again, and in a few days there's a big article in the newspaper. Then something else comes in the newspaper. People have forgotten about what happened because no positive contribution had been developed. So before we start the protest or if you like the anarchy we must first of all within ourselves try to overcome this need for an unnecessary kind of outlet of desire to do something. Turn this energy into opening up communication instead of just using it as aggressiveness. The world is changing at tremendous speed and I would like to end by saying that I realize that we cannot recreate another kind of life by settling whole populations in the countryside with everybody doing manual work and handicrafts and so on, with all the wonderful things that people have forgotten. What we have to deal with is the kind of psychological materialism in our heads. We are allowing ourselves to be fed ideas and concepts from outside in a way

that never lets us really be free anyway. It is inward materialism that we have to deal with first. It is the war that is going on inside our own heads to which we have to call the truce. Having done so doesn't mean that everyone has to become an enlightened person by any means. But at least if one person made an attempt at it and then began to work with someone else there would soon be a kind of communal work together.

Like in London it's not so much the colors, the chairs, the walls of the Underground which depress us but the faces, the people moving like ants, people moving in and out, in and out, each with their own depression. Let us begin to create a body of people moving about and carrying their own light.

GLOSSARY

THE DEFINITIONS that appear here are specific to the use of the terms in this book and should not be construed as their only or even their most common meanings. For additional information on terms defined here, the reader may wish to consult the glossary in *The Rain of Wisdom* or other books by Chögyam Trungpa.

amrita (Skt.): Ambrosia, food of the gods; the elixir of immortality; also a metaphor for spiritual healing.

anatman (Skt.): Selflessness or egolessness.

anatta (Pali): *See* anatman.

atiyana (Skt.): "The ultimate way"; the last and highest vehicle of spiritual instruction.

bardo (Tib.; also *pardo*): The indeterminate state intermediate between death and rebirth.

bhikshu (Skt.): A Buddhist monk who has received the higher ordination; a full member of the sangha.

bodhisattva (Skt. *bodhi* = "awakened state of mind"; *sattva* = "being" or "essence" in the sense of being without hesitation): One committed to following the path of compassion and the perfection of the six paramitas. The characteristic of bodhisattvas is that their actions do not refer back to a center or ego; they do not dwell in the absorption quality of meditation, which is without clarity or inspiration.

Bön (Tib.; also Pön): The old religion of the Tibetans prior to the coming of Buddhism; a form of shamanism.

buddha (Skt.): "The awake," one who has won the victory over ignorance (here likened to a sleep full of good and bad dreams) and attained enlightenment. Shakyamuni Buddha is the historical buddha of this age, according to Buddhist belief.

buddha-mandala (Skt.): A symbolic representation of various levels and aspects inherent in buddhahood.

chakra (Skt.): A wheel or circle. Used in certain centers or focal points of the human body, with their special subtle and spiritual correspondences, which figure in various forms of yoga.

chöten (Tib.): *See* stupa.

crazy wisdom: Personified as Vidyadhara, the holder of scientific knowledge. In this case, knowledge is not impersonal and abusive but plays a compassionate role. This is outrageous wisdom devoid of self and the common sense of literal thinking. Crazy wisdom is wild; in fact, it is the first attempt to express the dynamics of the tenth stage of the bodhisattva, to step out with nakedness of mind, unconditioned, beyond conceptualization. In this state, one acts purely on what is, with the qualities of earth, water, fire, space, and stormy air.

dakini (Skt.): The feminine principle associated with wisdom, or prajna. One finds many references to the dakini as prajnaparamita, the mother of the buddhas. It is pure knowledge, sharp intelligence, which can create chaos or harmony. As has been cautioned by Nagarjuna, misconceptions about prajnaparamita or shunyata are lethal because the excitement of theoretical discovery is not in harmony with fundamental energy, particularly when one abuses these energies. But when the marriage of knowledge and intuitive skillful means takes place in conjunction with the perfection of the six paramitas, then everything is buddha activity; the dance begins.

dana (Skt.): Generosity, giving without expectation, or opening, welcoming others. In other words, one does not establish the animal instinct of territory in oneself, but allows others to help themselves "to me." As is said in the bodhisattva disciplines, welcoming is the first gesture of the bodhisattva. Without this, none of the other perfections could be put into practice.

dharma (Skt.): The religion founded by the Buddha, his doctrine; the law or "norm" governing all existence; any particular entity, thing, or being. The dharmas are the innumerable things composing the universe. (*Dharma* comes from a root out of which a whole series of related meanings can be drawn.)

dharmakaya (Skt.): The "body of quiddity" or "essential body" of all the buddhas; the "body of the norm"; the inexpressible reality underlying everything.

dhyana (Skt.): Meditation or concentration. It means being watchful with that basic panoramic awareness that characterizes all the other paramitas.

Dhyana is the means of stabilizing oneself within the framework of seeing relationships and thereby seeing that one can afford to open. This openness and keen meditative intelligence bring one to deal with the nowness of each new situation.

drokpa (Tib.): A Tibetan highlander; an alpine herdsman.

dütsi (Tib.): *See* amrita.

EH: The seed syllable for all-encompassing space, the womb that accommodates all creations, the mother principle. It is passiveness or emptiness.

garuda (Skt.): A symbolic mythical bird, or celestial hawk, used in iconography. According to the story about the garuda, it nests in the wish-fulfilling tree of life, is full grown in the egg, and subdues the viciousness of the nagas (snake deities symbolizing the swamplike quality of passion). Since it is mature from birth, it signifies absolute confidence.

Gautama Buddha: The historical Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, who came to be known as Shakyamuni Buddha.

Geluk (Tib.): The latest of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, founded early in the fifteenth century by Lobsang Trakpa, surnamed Tsongkhapa. In this school great emphasis is laid on scriptural study and learning generally. Both the Dalai and Panchen lamas belong to this school.

genyen (Tib.): One who has received the primary ordination; this is imparted at one level to lay adherents and at another to celibates training for an eventual monastic ordination in the full sense.

geshe (Tib.; Skt. *upasaka*): The highest scholastic qualification in the Geluk and Sakya orders; a "doctorate" in religious studies.

getsül (Tib.): A novice monk.

gönkhang (Tib.): "House of the protective divinities"; a special temple reserved for certain rites.

gönpo (Tib.): A protective aspect of divinity.

guru (Skt.): Teacher. He continues in his search. As long as he does not go beyond his limitations, he can impart spiritual knowledge to other people. A guru must be prepared to regard his students as his teachers also and then true communication and relationship continues. When true communication takes place, there is a meeting of the minds beyond dualistic concepts. When a student has gone through the honeymoon affair with the individual guru, he begins to realize that the guru aspect plays a very important part in everyday life. He begins to perceive the colorful, dramatic, and shocking demonstration of the guru's teaching in everything. The guru gives the student back his own wisdom, but as it is received through the agency of someone else, spiritual pride is kept down.

of the meditation that they are related to this center as well. They are the various colors of emotions that are transmuted into the experience of a unified field.

mantra (Skt.): The way of transmuting energy through sound that is expressed by movement, breathing, and speech. It is the quintessence of different energies expressed in sound. For instance, HUM is one-pointedness and penetration. It is incorrect to use mantra frivolously for some kind of excitement. It is rather a straightforward meditation under the guidance of a master.

mudra (Skt.): A symbol in the wider sense of gesture or action. It is the inspiring color of phenomena. It is also a symbol expressed with the hands to state for oneself and others the quality of different moments of meditation, such as touching the earth with the right hand as a witness to Buddha's freedom from emotional and mental frivolousness.

nirmanakaya (Skt.): The "emanation body" of the buddhas; the earthly form of the Buddha in this or any other world cycle; also, symbolic manifestations of the dharma, such as sacred images, paintings, and books.

Nyingma (Tib.): The earliest of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism; the word itself means "ancient." The patron of the order is Padmasambhava, who brought the Buddhist traditions to Tibet.

paramitas (Skt.): Six transcendental actions that are attributes of buddha activity. In perfecting them, one transcends the notion of a centralized ego.

prajna (Skt.): Primordial intelligence, which is the key of the bodhisattva's actions in dealing with practical details of earth and space. He develops such a sharp and penetrating sense that he can cut through the conceptualized notion of duality and see the simplicity. Prajna is that quality which culminates in acting spontaneously with the help of the other paramitas with such precision that the spinal cord of duality is cut.

prasena (Skt.): A form of divination practiced only by initiates. Chögyam Trungpa was well known as an exceptional master of prasena and was consulted by many high-ranking Tibetan teachers (including His Holiness the Dalai Lama), who asked him to perform a prasena, or divination, for them.

reincarnation: May more precisely be termed "rebirth" because the accumulation of feelings, perceptions, impulses, and consciousness that are the constituents of so-called spirit do not live through as one solid thing, but are constantly changing. This state of consciousness does not belong exclusively to human beings and is not determined by the physical body. Rebirth into different lives is possible. It is a natural karmic force. (See also appendix 2 of *Born in Tibet*, pages 288–89.)

rinpoche (Tib., "precious one"): A title given to incarnate lamas, senior abbots, and occasionally even kings.

Sakya (Tib.): The third in chronology of the monastic foundations of Tibet. The chief center (whence comes the name) lies some seventy miles to the north of Mount Everest, but this order also has many adherents in eastern Tibet.

samadhi (Skt.): A state of spiritual concentration; a yogic trance. The term is also used for the death of any spiritual person.

samanera (Pali): *See* shramanera.

samatha (Pali): *See* shamatha.

sambhogakaya (Skt.): The "fruition body" or "body of bliss" of the buddhas; the link between the inexpressible essence and its manifestation in the visible buddhas; the various aspects of wisdom, compassion, and other divine names or qualities.

samsara (Skt.): The round of existence; the indefinite play of interacting cause and effect that expresses itself in the birth and death of beings with its incidental suffering.

sangha (Skt.):The "congregation" founded by the Buddha; his dedicated followers; the whole order of Buddhist monks and nuns. In the mahayana, this term embraces the whole company of saints in all states of existence.

serto (Tib.; also sertok): A golden crest ornament to indicate dignity, placed on the roofs of sacred edifices and houses; people of importance also put it on the heads of their horses. See illustration on page 88.

shamatha (Skt.): Mindfulness practice. A basic meditation practice common to most schools of Buddhism, the aim of which is to tame the mind.

shila (Skt.): Morality or discipline. The excitement of the discovery or glimpse of the awakened state of mind should not be abused. One must not miss a moment of its inspiration. Equally, one must develop, with the help of panoramic awareness, stability and precision of insight and a knowledge of situations, so that the conduct of the bodhisattva is dignified.

shramanera (Skt.): A monk undergoing training. Many monks remain at this degree and do not take the higher ordination as bhikshus.

shunyata (Skt.): "Emptiness." A completely open and unbounded clarity of mind characterized by groundlessness and freedom from all conceptual frameworks. It could be called "openness," since *emptiness* can convey the mistaken notion of a state of voidness or blankness. In fact, shunyata is inseparable from compassion and all other awakened qualities.

siddhas (Skt.): Great yogis who have achieved the experience of mahamudra. *See also* crazy wisdom.

sila (Pali): *See* shila.

skillful means: The active masculine principle on the feminine ground of prajna. It is not based purely on ego-inclined common sense. If one relates to open space, then his way of perceiving the display of apparent phenomena is colorful and inspiring, so that he doesn't hesitate to deal with the situation. He simply sees the open situation, the way of unconditioned appropriate response to the nowness.

stupa (Skt.): A symbolic monument, roughly bell-shaped, common to the Buddhist world from early times. In its Tibetan and kindred forms, the tiers and other details of a stupa denote various stages of spiritual realization.

sutra (Skt.): A book of the canonical scriptures; also a theoretical treatise not directly concerned with methodic realization, accessible to all the faithful without restriction.

Tai Situ: Chinese title conferred by one of the Ming emperors on the abbots of Palpung.

takpa (Tib.): An elementary form of divination.

tantra (Skt.): A treatise relating to methods of spiritual concentration; a book of instruction concerning particular forms of yoga. As compared with sutras, tantras remain relatively "secret" documents, for the use of initiates only; a kalung is required in order to qualify a person to study one of these, while a wang (empowerment) is required in order to practice the method in question.

thangka (Tib.): A sacred painting, usually carried out on cotton cloth primed with plaster and mounted on silk so as to form a scroll that can, if necessary, be rolled up. Patchwork thangkas occur, but more rarely; a few have been embroidered, mostly by Mongol artists.

togden (Tib.): A term used in the Kagyü school indicating one who has actually experienced reality in a high degree.

torma (Tib.; Skt. *bhalinta*): A symbolic cake, usually conical in shape, used in rituals.

tulku (Tib.; also tülku): See appendix 2 of *Born in Tibet*, pages 288–89.

upasaka (Skt.): *See* genyen.

vajra (Skt.; Tib. *dorje*, "noble stone"): A symbol of indestructibility and of the nature of reality, indicating its eternal or "adamantine" quality; a ritual scepter shaped like the thunderbolt of Jupiter. It can destroy that which seemingly cannot be destroyed. *Vajra* is also referred to as penetrating wisdom that cuts through solidified ignorance.

vajra posture: The cross-legged meditation position associated with the Buddha and with yogins generally.

vajrayana (Skt.): The highest of the three vehicles or ways. The way from which there is no turning back until enlightenment is reached.

VAM: The seed syllable of the indestructible vajra nature, also representing great joy. It is the principle of son or youthful prince, the active force of clear light.

Varshka Vihara: A place for the traditional "summer retreat" carried out by monks ever since the time of the Buddha.

vihara (Skt.): Originally "a dwelling." In Buddhism the term is used for a religious building, usually a monastery.

virya (Skt.): Energy or exertion. Whoever practices virya finds delight in it, because it is not based on painfully going on and on and on, but it is a way of seeing the joyous element, of seeing that energy does not have to be forced but that it develops spontaneously. This happens by not regarding things as a duty in the puritanical or religious sense but doing them because one has already established the connection between the action and one's being.

wangkur (Tib.): Literally "empowerment"; an "initiation," conferred privately or sometimes to groups, enabling those receiving it to practice a particular meditation or yogic method under a qualified spiritual master. In Tibet (as elsewhere) all teachings aiming at a supra-individual realization follow this pattern, though forms and rites will vary considerably as to detail.

yoga (Skt.): Literally "union," with the same root as the English word *yoke*. It denotes any specific method (including its theoretical premises) of which the aim is to release the unitive knowledge latent in the heart of man by bringing under control the various dispersive tendencies of mind and body. A yogi (or yogin) is one who practices such a method and, more especially, one who in virtue of the knowledge thus awakened has qualified as a master of this spiritual art.

SOURCES

FOR A DETAILED account of the publication history of the writings listed below, see the introduction to this volume of *The Collected Works*.

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CAROLYN ROSE GIMIAN

A BIOGRAPHY OF CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA

THE VENERABLE CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA was born in the province of Kham in eastern Tibet in 1939. When he was just thirteen months old, Chögyam Trungpa was recognized as a major tulku, or incarnate teacher. According to Tibetan tradition, an enlightened teacher is capable, based on his or her vow of compassion, of reincarnating in human form over a succession of generations. Before dying, such a teacher may leave a letter or other clues to the whereabouts of the next incarnation. Later, students and other realized teachers look through these clues and, based on those plus a careful examination of dreams and visions, conduct searches to discover and recognize the successor. Thus, particular lines of teaching are formed, in some cases extending over many centuries. Chögyam Trungpa was the eleventh in the teaching lineage known as the Trungpa Tulkus.

Once young tulkus are recognized, they enter a period of intensive training in the theory and practice of the Buddhist teachings. Trungpa Rinpoche, after being enthroned as supreme abbot of Surmang Monastery and governor of Surmang District, began a period of training that would last eighteen years, until his departure from Tibet in 1959. As a Kagyü tulku, his training was based on the systematic practice of meditation and on refined theoretical understanding of Buddhist philosophy. One of the four great lineages of Tibet, the Kagyü is known as the practicing (or practice) lineage.

At the age of eight, Trungpa Rinpoche received ordination as a novice monk. Following this, he engaged in intensive study and practice of the

traditional monastic disciplines, including traditional Tibetan poetry and monastic dance. His primary teachers were Jamgön Kongtrül of Sechen and Khenpo Gangshar—leading teachers in the Nyingma and Kagyü lineages. In 1958, at the age of eighteen, Trungpa Rinpoche completed his studies, receiving the degrees of kyorpön (doctor of divinity) and khenpo (master of studies). He also received full monastic ordination.

The late 1950s were a time of great upheaval in Tibet. As it became clear that the Chinese communists intended to take over the country by force, many people, both monastic and lay, fled the country. Trungpa Rinpoche spent many harrowing months trekking over the Himalayas (described later in his book *Born in Tibet*). After narrowly escaping capture by the Chinese, he at last reached India in 1959. While in India, Trungpa Rinpoche was appointed to serve as spiritual adviser to the Young Lamas Home School in Delhi, India. He served in this capacity from 1959 to 1963.

Trungpa Rinpoche's opportunity to emigrate to the West came when he received a Spalding sponsorship to attend Oxford University. At Oxford he studied comparative religion, philosophy, history, and fine arts. He also studied Japanese flower arranging, receiving a degree from the Sogetsu School. While in England, Trungpa Rinpoche began to instruct Western students in the dharma, and in 1967 he founded the Samye Ling Meditation Center in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. During this period, he also published his first two books, both in English: *Born in Tibet* (1966) and *Meditation in Action* (1969).

In 1968 Trungpa Rinpoche traveled to Bhutan, where he entered into a solitary meditation retreat. While on retreat, Rinpoche received[1] a pivotal text for all of his teaching in the West, "The Sadhana of Mahamudra," a text that documents the spiritual degeneration of modern times and its antidote, genuine spirituality that leads to the experience of naked and luminous mind. This retreat marked a pivotal change in his approach to teaching. Soon after returning to England, he became a layper-

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1. In Tibet, there is a well-documented tradition of teachers discovering or "receiving" texts that are believed to have been buried, some of them in the realm of space, by Padmasambhava, who is regarded as the father of Buddhism in Tibet. Teachers who find what Padmasambhava left hidden for the beings of future ages, which may be objects or physical texts hidden in rocks, lakes, and other locations, are referred to as tertöns, and the materials they find are known as terma. Chögyam Trungpa was already known as a tertön in Tibet.

son, putting aside his monastic robes and dressing in ordinary Western attire. In 1970 he married a young Englishwoman, Diana Pybus, and together they left Scotland and moved to North America. Many of his early students and his Tibetan colleagues found these changes shocking and upsetting. However, he expressed a conviction that in order for the dharma to take root in the West, it needed to be taught free from cultural trappings and religious fascination.

During the seventies, America was in a period of political and cultural ferment. It was a time of fascination with the East. Nevertheless, almost from the moment he arrived in America, Trungpa Rinpoche drew many students to him who were seriously interested in the Buddhist teachings and the practice of meditation. However, he severely criticized the materialistic approach to spirituality that was also quite prevalent, describing it as a "spiritual supermarket." In his lectures, and in his books *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism* (1973) and *The Myth of Freedom* (1976), he pointed to the simplicity and directness of the practice of sitting meditation as the way to cut through such distortions of the spiritual journey.

During his seventeen years of teaching in North America, Trungpa Rinpoche developed a reputation as a dynamic and controversial teacher. He was a pioneer, one of the first Tibetan Buddhist teachers in North America, preceding by some years and indeed facilitating the later visits by His Holiness the Karmapa, His Holiness Khyentse Rinpoche, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and many others. In the United States, he found a spiritual kinship with many Zen masters, who were already presenting Buddhist meditation. In the very early days, he particularly connected with Suzuki Roshi, the founder of Zen Center in San Francisco. In later years he was close with Kobun Chino Roshi and Bill Kwong Roshi in Northern California; with Maezumi Roshi, the founder of the Los Angeles Zen Center; and with Eido Roshi, abbot of the New York Zendo Shobo-ji.

Fluent in the English language, Chögyam Trungpa was one of the first Tibetan Buddhist teachers who could speak to Western students directly, without the aid of a translator. Traveling extensively throughout North America and Europe, he gave thousands of talks and hundred of seminars. He established major centers in Vermont, Colorado, and Nova Scotia, as well as many smaller meditation and study centers in cities throughout North America and Europe. Vajradhatu was formed in 1973 as the central administrative body of this network.

In 1974 Trungpa Rinpoche founded the Naropa Institute (now Naropa University), which became the first and only accredited Buddhist-inspired university in North America. He lectured extensively at the institute, and his book *Journey without Goal* (1981) is based on a course he taught there. In 1976 he established the Shambhala Training program, a series of seminars that present a nonsectarian path of spiritual warriorship grounded in the practice of sitting meditation. His book *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior* (1984) gives an overview of the Shambhala teachings.

In 1976 Trungpa Rinpoche appointed Ösel Tendzin (Thomas F. Rich) as his Vajra Regent, or dharma heir. Ösel Tendzin worked closely with Trungpa Rinpoche in the administration of Vajradhatu and Shambhala Training. He taught extensively from 1976 until his death in 1990 and is the author of *Buddha in the Palm of Your Hand*.

Trungpa Rinpoche was also active in the field of translation. Working with Francesca Fremantle, he rendered a new translation of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, which was published in 1975. Later he formed the Nālandā Translation Committee in order to translate texts and liturgies for his own students as well as to make important texts available publicly.

In 1979 Trungpa Rinpoche conducted a ceremony empowering his eldest son, Ösel Rangdröl Mukpo, as his successor in the Shambhala lineage. At that time he gave him the title of Sawang ("Earth Lord").

Trungpa Rinpoche was also known for his interest in the arts and particularly for his insights into the relationship between contemplative discipline and the artistic process. Two books published since his death—*The Art of Calligraphy* (1994) and *Dharma Art* (1996)—present this aspect of his work. His own artwork included calligraphy, painting, flower arranging, poetry, playwriting, and environmental installations. In addition, at the Naropa Institute he created an educational atmosphere that attracted many leading artists and poets. The exploration of the creative process in light of contemplative training continues there as a provocative dialogue. Trungpa Rinpoche also published two books of poetry: *Mudra* (1972) and *First Thought Best Thought* (1983). In 1998 a retrospective compilation of his poetry, *Timely Rain*, was published.

Shortly before his death, in a meeting with Samuel Bercholz, the publisher of Shambhala Publications, Chögyam Trungpa expressed his interest in publishing 108 volumes of his teachings, to be called the Dharma Ocean Series. "Dharma Ocean" is the translation of Chögyam Trungpa's

Tibetan teaching name, Chökyi Gyatso. The Dharma Ocean Series was to consist primarily of material edited to allow readers to encounter this rich array of teachings simply and directly rather than in an overly systematized or condensed form. In 1991 the first posthumous volume in the series, *Crazy Wisdom*, was published, and since then another seven volumes have appeared.

Trungpa Rinpoche's published books represent only a fraction of the rich legacy of his teachings. During his seventeen years of teaching in North America, he crafted the structures necessary to provide his students with thorough, systematic training in the dharma. From introductory talks and courses to advanced group retreat practices, these programs emphasized a balance of study and practice, of intellect and intuition. *Trungpa* by Fabrice Midal, a French biography (forthcoming in English translation under the title *Chögyam Trungpa*), details the many forms of training that Chögyam Trungpa developed. Since Trungpa Rinpoche's death, there have been significant changes in the training offered by the organizations he founded. However, many of the original structures remain in place, and students can pursue their interest in meditation and the Buddhist path through these many forms of training. Senior students of Trungpa Rinpoche continue to be involved in both teaching and meditation instruction in such programs.

In addition to his extensive teachings in the Buddhist tradition, Trungpa Rinpoche also placed great emphasis on the Shambhala teachings, which stress the importance of meditation in action, synchronizing mind and body, and training oneself to approach obstacles or challenges in everyday life with the courageous attitude of a warrior, without anger. The goal of creating an enlightened society is fundamental to the Shambhala teachings. According to the Shambhala approach, the realization of an enlightened society comes not purely through outer activity, such as community or political involvement, but from appreciation of the senses and the sacred dimension of day-to-day life. A second volume of these teachings, entitled *Great Eastern Sun*, was published in 1999.

Chögyam Trungpa died in 1987, at the age of forty-seven. By the time of his death, he was known not only as Rinpoche ("Precious Jewel") but also as Vajracharya ("Vajra Holder") and as Vidyadhara ("Wisdom Holder") for his role as a master of the vajrayana, or tantric teachings of Buddhism. As a holder of the Shambhala teachings, he had also received the titles of Dorje Dradül ("Indestructible Warrior") and Sakyong

("Earth Protector"). He is survived by his wife, Diana Judith Mukpo, and five sons. His eldest son, the Sawang Ösel Rangdröl Mukpo, succeeds him as the spiritual head of Vajradhatu. Acknowledging the importance of the Shambhala teachings to his father's work, the Sawang changed the name of the umbrella organization to Shambhala, with Vajradhatu remaining one of its major divisions. In 1995 the Sawang received the Shambhala title of Sakyong like his father before him and was also confirmed as an incarnation of the great ecumenical teacher Mipham Rinpoche.

Trungpa Rinpoche is widely acknowledged as a pivotal figure in introducing the buddhadharma to the Western world. He joined his great appreciation for Western culture with his deep understanding of his own tradition. This led to a revolutionary approach to teaching the dharma, in which the most ancient and profound teachings were presented in a thoroughly contemporary way. Trungpa Rinpoche was known for his fearless proclamation of the dharma: free from hesitation, true to the purity of the tradition, and utterly fresh. May these teachings take root and flourish for the benefit of all sentient beings.

BOOKS BY CHÖGYAM TRUNGPA

Born in Tibet (George Allen & Unwin, 1966; Shambhala Publications, 1977)

Chögyam Trungpa's account of his upbringing and education as an incarnate lama in Tibet and the powerful story of his escape to India. Epilogues added in 1971 and 1977 details Trungpa Rinpoche's time in England in the 1960s and his early years in North America.

Meditation in Action (Shambhala Publications, 1969)

Using the life of the Buddha as a starting point, this classic on meditation and the practice of compassion explores the six paramitas, or enlightened actions on the Buddhist path. Its simplicity and directness make this an appealing book for beginners and seasoned meditators alike.

Mudra (Shambhala Publications, 1972)

This collection of poems mostly written in the 1960s in England also includes two short translations of Buddhist texts and a commentary on the ox-herding pictures, well-known metaphors for the journey on the Buddhist path.

Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism (Shambhala Publications, 1973)

The first volume of Chögyam Trungpa's teaching in America is still fresh, outrageous, and up to date. It describes landmarks on the Buddhist path and focuses on the pitfalls of materialism that plague the modern age.

The Dawn of Tantra, by Herbert V. Guenther and Chögyam Trungpa (Shambhala Publications, 1975)

Jointly authored by Chögyam Trungpa and Buddhist scholar Herbert V. Guenther, this volume presents an introduction to the Buddhist teachings of tantra.

Glimpses of Abhidharma (Shambhala Publications, 1975)

An exploration of the five skandhas, or stages in the development of ego, based on an early seminar given by Chögyam Trungpa. The final chapter on auspicious coincidence is a penetrating explanation of karma and the true experience of spiritual freedom.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead: The Great Liberation through Hearing in the Bardo, translated with commentary by Francesca Fremantle and Chögyam Trungpa (Shambhala Publications, 1975)

Chögyam Trungpa and Francesca Fremantle collaborated on the translation of this important text by Guru Rinpoche, as discovered by Karma Lingpa, and are coauthors of this title. Trungpa Rinpoche provides a powerful commentary on death and dying and on the text itself, which allows modern readers to find the relevance of this ancient guide to the passage from life to death and back to life again.

The Myth of Freedom and the Way of Meditation (Shambhala Publications, 1976)

In short, pithy chapters that exemplify Chögyam Trungpa's hard-hitting and compelling teaching style, this book explores the meaning of freedom and genuine spirituality in the context of traveling the Buddhist path.

The Rain of Wisdom (Shambhala Publications, 1980)

An extraordinary collection of the poetry or songs of the teachers of the Kagyü lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, to which Chögyam Trungpa belonged. The text was translated by the Nālandā Translation Committee under the direction of Chögyam Trungpa. The volume includes an extensive glossary of Buddhist terms.

Journey without Goal: The Tantric Wisdom of the Buddha (Shambhala Publications, 1981)

Based on an early seminar at the Naropa Institute, this guide to the tantric teachings of Buddhism is provocative and profound, emphasizing

both the dangers and the wisdom of the vajrayana, the diamond path of Buddhism.

The Life of Marpa the Translator (Shambhala Publications, 1982)

A renowned teacher of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition who combined scholarship and meditative realization, Marpa made three arduous journeys to India to collect the teachings of the Kagyü lineage and bring them to Tibet. Chögyam Trungpa and the Nālandā Translation Committee have produced an inspiring translation of his life's story.

First Thought Best Thought: 108 Poems (Shambhala Publications, 1983)

This collection consists mainly of poetry written during Chögyam Trungpa's first ten years in North America, showing his command of the American idiom, his understanding of American culture, as well as his playfulness and his passion. Some poems from earlier years were also included. Many of the poems from *First Thought Best Thought* were later reprinted in *Timely Rain*.

Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior (Shambhala Publications, 1984)

Chögyam Trungpa's classic work on the path of warriorship still offers timely advice. This book shows how an attitude of fearlessness and open heart provides the courage to meet the challenges of modern life.

Crazy Wisdom (Shambhala Publications, 1991)

Two seminars from the 1970s were edited for this volume on the life and teachings of Guru Rinpoche, or Padmasambhava, the founder of Buddhism in Tibet.

The Heart of the Buddha (Shambhala Publications, 1991)

A collection of essays, talks, and seminars present the teachings of Buddhism as they relate to everyday life.

Orderly Chaos: The Mandala Principle (Shambhala Publications, 1991)

The mandala is often thought of as a Buddhist drawing representing tantric iconography. However, Chögyam Trungpa explores how both confusion and enlightenment are made up of patterns of orderly chaos that are the basis for the principle of mandala. A difficult but rewarding discussion of the topic of chaos and its underlying structure.

Secret Beyond Thought: The Five Chakras and the Four Karmas (Vajradhatu Publications, 1991)

Two talks from an early seminar on the principles of the chakras and the karmas, teachings from the Buddhist tantric tradition.

The Lion's Roar: An Introduction to Tantra (Shambhala Publications, 1992)

An in-depth presentation of the nine yanas, or stages, of the path in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Particularly interesting are the chapters on visualization and the five buddha families.

Transcending Madness: The Experience of the Six Bardos (Shambhala Publications, 1992)

The editor of this volume, Judith L. Lief, calls it "a practical guide to Buddhist psychology." The book is based on two early seminars on the intertwined ideas of bardo (or the gap in experience and the gap between death and birth) and the six realms of being.

Training the Mind and Cultivating Loving-Kindness (Shambhala Publications, 1993)

This volume presents fifty-nine slogans, or aphorisms related to meditation practice, which show a practical path to making friends with oneself and developing compassion for others, through the practice of sacrificing self-centeredness for the welfare of others.

Glimpses of Shunyata (Vajradhatu Publications, 1993)

These four lectures on principle of shunyata, or emptiness, are an experiential exploration of the ground, path, and fruition of realizing this basic principle of mahayana Buddhism.

The Art of Calligraphy: Joining Heaven and Earth (Shambhala Publications, 1994)

Chögyam Trungpa's extensive love affair with brush and ink is showcased in this book, which also includes an introduction to dharma art and a discussion of the Eastern principles of heaven, earth, and man as applied to the creative process. The beautiful reproductions of fifty-four calligraphies are accompanied by inspirational quotations from the author's works.

Illusion's Game: The Life and Teaching of Naropa (Shambhala Publications, 1994)

The great Indian teacher Naropa was a renowned master of the teachings of mahamudra, an advanced stage of realization in Tibetan Buddhism. This book presents Chögyam Trungpa's teachings on Naropa's life and arduous search for enlightenment.

The Path Is the Goal: A Basic Handbook of Buddhist Meditation (Shambhala Publications, 1995)

A simple and practical manual for the practice of meditation that evokes the author's penetrating insight and colorful language.

Dharma Art (Shambhala Publications, 1996)

Chögyam Trungpa was a calligrapher, painter, poet, designer, and photographer as well as a master of Buddhist meditation. Drawn from his many seminars and talks on the artistic process, this work presents his insights into art and the artist.

Timely Rain: Selected Poetry of Chögyam Trungpa (Shambhala Publications, 1998)

With a foreword by Allen Ginsberg, this collection of poems was organized thematically by editor David I. Rome to show the breadth of the poet's work. Core poems from *Mudra* and *First Thought Best Thought* are reprinted here, along with many poems and "sacred songs" published here for the first time.

Great Eastern Sun: The Wisdom of Shambhala (Shambhala Publications, 1999)

This sequel and complement to *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior* offers more heartfelt wisdom on Shambhala warriorship.

Glimpses of Space: The Feminine Principle and Evam (Vajradhatu Publications, 1999)

Two seminars on the tantric understanding of the feminine and masculine principles, what they are and how they work together in vajrayana Buddhist practice as the nondual experience of wisdom and skillful means.

The Essential Chögyam Trungpa (Shambhala Publications, 2000)

This concise overview of Trungpa Rinpoche's teachings consists of forty selections from fourteen different books, articulating the secular path of the Shambhala warrior as well as the Buddhist path of meditation and awakening.

Glimpses of Mahayana (Vajradhatu Publications, 2001)

This little volume focuses on the attributes of buddha nature, the development of compassion, and the experience of being a practitioner on the bodhisattva path of selfless action to benefit others.

RESOURCES

For information regarding meditation instruction or inquiries about a practice center near you, please contact one of the following:

Shambhala International
1084 Tower Road
Halifax, NS
B3H 2Y5 Canada
Telephone: (902) 425-4275, ext. 10
Fax: (902) 423-2750
Website: www.shambhala.org (This website contains information about the more than 100 meditation centers affiliated with Shambhala, the international network of Buddhist practice centers established by Chögyam Trungpa.)

Shambhala Europe
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Telephone: 49-0-700-108-000-00
E-mail: europe@shambhala.org
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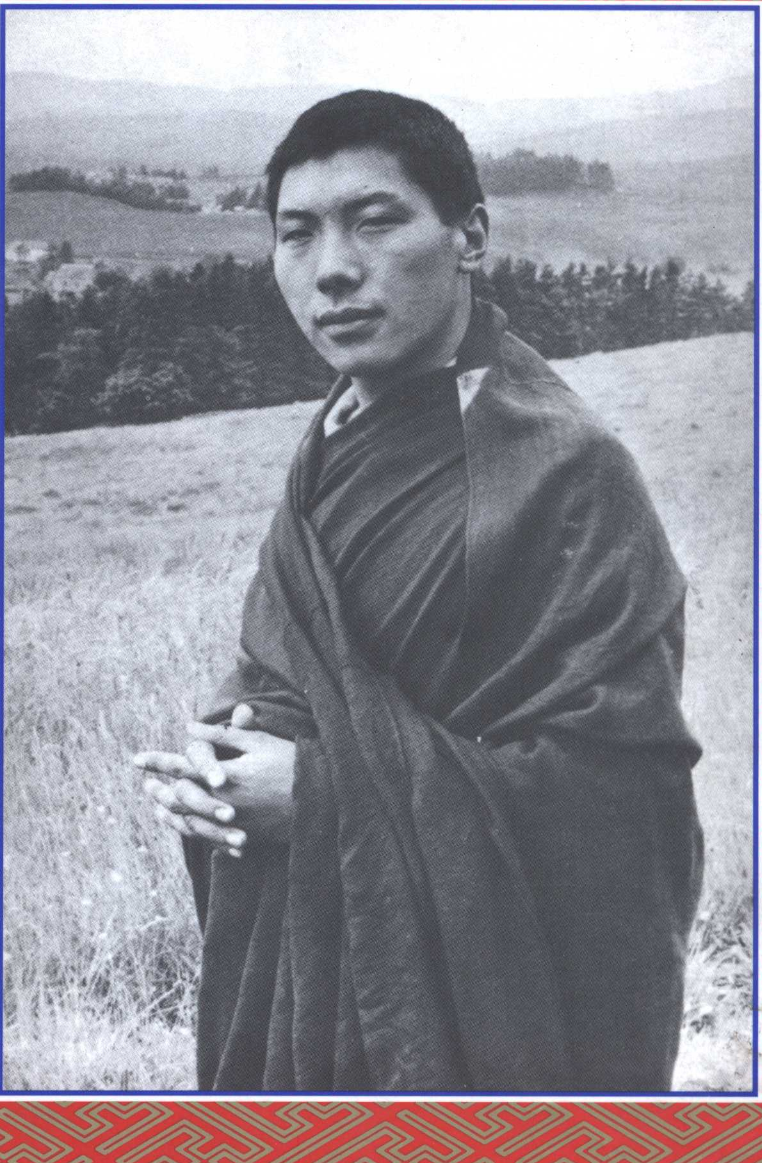
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